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IDENTITY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION:
A SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL MODEL OF GAY FAMILYMEN'S ADAPTATIONS

by

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A THESIS
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To My Parents
DeWitt and Bertha Miller

IDENTITY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION: A SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL MODEL OF GAY FAMILYMEN'S ADAPTATIONS

ABSTRACT

Employing the research of Strauss (1959), Stone (1962), and Rainwater (1970), this dissertation synthesizes a heuristic model to explain the processes whereby people resolve identity conflicts and achieve a valid identity. The model is critiqued and areas requiring further clarification and precision are noted. Empirical research is proposed in order to address undeveloped areas of the model.

To this end, depth interviews were conducted with a chain-referral sample of fifty gay husbands and fathers ("gay familymen") who were married at least once and parented a child for at least five years. Respondents recount the process whereby they developed changing answers to the identity questions surrounding their conflicting statuses: "Who do I feel I am?", "Who do I announce myself to be?", and "How do others perceive me?"

Data analysis reveals that identity conflict resolution, for the respondents, involves a sequence of developmental stages. The five stages in this ideal-typical model are: Identity Disorientation, Identity Marginality, Identity Affiliation, Identity Acceptance, and Identity Affirmation. The identity "work" of each stage is described as are the social psychological correlates that mark transitions across the stages.

In the concluding chapter, the fit between the model and the data is assessed. The data are used to suggest refinements in the Strauss-Stone-Rainwater model and to evaluate the heuristic utility of the model in explaining identity conflict resolution. The largely middle class nature of the sample qualifies the findings and suggestions are made for further research with demographically diverse populations.

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IDENTITY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION: A SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL MODEL OF GAY FAMILYMEN"S ADAPTATIONS

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

> The need for a valid identity is fundamental. Everyone needs to "be somebody."
>
> --Lee Rainwater (1970: 374)
> Behind Ghetto Walls

INTRODUCTION

This study belongs in the larger intellectual tradition devoted to the "problem of identity." More specifically, the research is concerned with the process whereby people resolve identity conflicts and achieve a valid identity.

In modern mass society people typically experience multiple identities. Some multiple identities present little problem since they are regarded as compatible (e.g., wife and mother; social critic and journalist). Others present minimal difficulty since they are regarded as incorporating a subordinate and superordinate identity (e.g., graduate student who is a lecturer; assembly line worker who coaches the company's hockey team). People change from one identity to another in response to the contingencies of the various situations they encounter. Alfred McClung Lee in Multivalent Man (1966: 92) says this happens so frequently that the transitions become routinized, that they become "second nature."

Identity conflict becomes salient, however, when a person holds two or more identities that are regarded as contradictory. Some extreme examples of this include a physician who is an executioner, a prostitute who is a homemaker, a nun who administers an agency that funds abortions. In order for the participants to manage such conflicting identities, they must command extraordinary social and psychological resources that allow them to organize their occupational, social, and domestic lives so that they are compartmentalized territorially, temporally, and biographically.

Even when people are able to juggle multiple identities simultaneously -- and are able to separate their lives so that conflicting identities are obscured from others -- the potential for fragmentation and disintegration exists, and the individual is faced with a possible loss of a sense of himself as a coherent person with stable characteristics (Lauer and Handel 1977: 387-388).

What remains to be specified -- and this is the purpose of the present research -- is how people marshall resources to create a tolerable and viable identity, what steps are involved in the process, and how the varying combination of resources impacts on the threshold of viability. Also in need of specification are the various strategies whereby the resources are translated into coping mechanisms and incorporated into one's life. Further, we do not know what it feels like to manage highly conflicting identities over time, and how these perceptions change throughout the life cycle. Consequently, the purpose of this research is to develop a heuristic model[1] to explain the social-psychological process whereby people resolve such conflicts and achieve a valid identity.

How can this purpose be achieved? The present research pursues three steps toward this objective. First, it investigates the scholarly literature to assess what social-psychological models exist (or can be developed from the writings) to guide, structure, and heuristically organize identity resolving processes. Specifically, it looks for models that explain identity conflict in both conventional and unconventional identities, that address both social and psychological variables.

Second, in order to generate empirical data on identity conflict and resolution, life history interviews are conducted with a largely middle class sample of gay husbands and fathers or "gay familymen". (The effect of this class composition on the findings is discussed in Chapters Four and Ten). Specifically, this question is researched: How do gay familymen experience their two statuses and resolve conflicts to achieve a valid identity?

Third, answers from the above two investigations are combined to assess how much fit or slippage there is between the heuristic model and the gay familymen data. Specifically, how can the data be used to refine and extend the model?[2] In short, this research investigates how gay familymen resolve identity conflicts to achieve a valid identity and this information is employed towards completing a general heuristic model of identity conflict and resolution.

In addressing the first question, this chapter reviews the scholarly literature in social psychology, searching for a heuristic model that organizes the process of identity conflict and resolution. This search is discussed under the following headings: Parameters in Identity, Examining Models of Identity, Models of Sexual Identity, The Strauss-Stone-Rainwater Model. The chapter concludes with a chapter summary and an overview of the organization of the dissertation.

THE SEARCH FOR A HEURISTIC MODEL OF IDENTITY CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Parameters in Identity

A great deal has been written on identity. There are works that deal with religious identity, national identity, and racial identity, among others. A review of this literature reveals no consistent definition of "identity." There is little consensus on how this term is to be used. As Saram and Hirabayashi (1980: 9) comment: "Identity is an elastic concept that could empirically accommodate a wide range of reference points." For example, some writers

(Lynd 1958) use "identity," "identification," and "to identify with" synonymously. Others (Strauss 1959, Stone 1962, Rainwater 1970) who will be discussed later in this chapter disagree.

Many theoretical frameworks within the disciplines of psychology and sociology have been employed in the study of identity. Within sociology, it has been discussed using the theoretical approaches of phenomenology, structural functionalism, dramaturgy, and labeling, among others. (For a discussion of identity and various aspects of symbolic interaction theory, see the introductory chapter of Haas and Shaffir 1978: 3-53.) Sociologists have studied identity under the rubrics of collective behavior, deviance, minorities, sociology of occupations, and sociology of religion.

To complicate the problem, both micro and macro levels of analysis are employed by those who discuss identity. For example, some scholars (see Freud 1959; Erikson 1968; Freedman, Kaplan, Sadock 1975) write of identity as an intrapsychic phenomenon. These psychoanalytic models involve intrapersonal dynamics that are not readily subject to empirical investigation and have little relevance for sociology. By contrast, some political scientists/commentators (see Levesque 1972, on Canadian and French-Canadian identity) write about identity at a macro level of analysis.

It is not the purpose of this discussion to review or synthesize all the literature -- of whatever discipline, theoretical school, or level of analysis -- that deals with identity. The purpose is to sift the literature to locate a social-psychological model of identity conflict resolution. Thus, the following discussion deals only with those levels and approaches that directly pertain to social-psychological models of identity conflict resolution.

Examining Models of Identity

Social-psychological discussions of identity are found in the works of Lynd (1958), McCall and Simmons (1966), and Garfinkle (1967). In general, these analyses follow the concept of "self" developed variously by Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934). As will be discussed later, "self" is only one aspect of the meaning of identity. Consequently, the heuristic utility of these works is limited.

Literature on religious, national, and class identity has been produced by Lofland and Stark (1965), Porter (1965), Haas and Shaffir (1978), among others. Although not limited to a micro level of analysis, their work is not applicable to the concerns of this dissertation because they are concerned with identity only in the sense of "identification with" a collectivity (e.g., religious cult, social class).

Goffman's work on identity (1963) makes clear that he is more concerned with issues of "spoiled reputation" than with "identity," although he tends to use the terms interchangeably. Klapp (1969: 39) employs a tripartite definition of identity similar to the one we shall later discuss as the Strauss-Stone-Rainwater model. Klapp limits its utility, however, because he develops it only as it can be applied within the framework of collective behavior.

The above approaches to identity are not applicable to the question posed herein because their conceptualization or level of analysis is inadequate as a general social-psychological model to heuristically organize identity resolving processes. The same is true of the discussion by Becker _et al_. (1961) of occupational identities. Other works by Becker (1963), as well as those by Lemert (1951) and Schur (1965, 1971) approach pathways to deviance and deviant identity from the labeling perspective. Scheff (1970: 10) suggests, however, that "deviant/deviance" are terms that most research respondents eschew and that it is prejudicial for social scientists to apply such models over the objections of the persons thus designated. Scheff suggests that models of identity acquisition which are broader than those that deal only with deviant identity need to be developed, although he does not present a concrete alternative.

Besides the above social-psychological literature, there is considerable research that addresses the issue of sexual identity development. This work is discussed in the next section.

Models of Sexual Identity

Work on sexual identity has been completed by Rosenberg and Sutton-Smith (1972), Yorburg (1974), Green (1974), Money and Tucker (1975). These authors, however, do not focus on sexual orientation identity. Instead, they are interested in the acquisition of gender identity. They investigate how children come to see themselves as male or female, masculine or feminine. Since gender identity ordinarily stabilizes by the age of five and does not involve conscious processes of resolving two or more conflicting identities over the life span, the above research has minimal relevance to the concerns of the present investigation.

Several works have been completed that claim to investigate homosexual identity. They are Dank (1971), Warren (1974), Plummer (1975), Sawchuck (1974), Ponse (1978), Troiden (1977), and Weinberg (1977). These authors write of identity as synonymous with "self concept." When they apply this formulation to their data on homosexuals, their writings are limited to a description of how people "identify," or come to see themselves, as homosexual. In other words, their research is simply a description of "coming out." As will become evident later in this dissertation, the above research addresses only part of identity formation and is inadequate to explain the ongoing processes of identity conflict and resolution.

Hammersmith and Weinberg (1973) wrote a paper on "Homosexual identity: Commitment, adjustment, and significant others." Despite its title, the paper is concerned, not with the process of identity formation, but with what factors correlate with identity maintenance. Nowhere do they define what they mean by "identity," although it is clear that they are not concerned with the process of identity conflict and resolution. Instead, their article is a replication of Schwartz et al. (1966) testing six causal models of identity maintenance with cross-cultural, questionnaire data using multiple regression and correlation analysis. This is relevant to the dissertation question posed here in only an oblique way.

The Strauss-Stone-Rainwater Model

As can be seen from this review of the identity literature, there is a scarcity of social-psychological models of identity conflict and resolution that have general applicability. The writings of Strauss (1959), Stone (1962), and Rainwater (1970), however, provide an exception to this deficiency. The foundation upon which their work rests derives from the perspective of symbolic interactionism. Their formulations grew out of their ethnographic and interview data on careers, child and adult socialization, clothing and identity, and black identities, although their discussions stretch to wider issues. None of these researchers, however, details a model of identity conflict resolution on a step-by-step basis, rather they couch it in prose discussions. The material for a potential model is fragmented across the writings of the three men. It is possible to pull together fragments from the three sources and to synthesize a tentative model of identity conflict and resolution. This issue is developed in Chapter Two, where we describe the development of these authors' ideas and how they built on each other's work. We then show how it is possible to develop a heuristic model from their related perspectives, a model we refer to as the Strauss-Stone-Rainwater (hereafter SSR) model. The later part of Chapter Two evaluates the strengths and weaknesses, the remaining gaps and deficiencies of the model. The final section of the chapter outlines how a study of the process of identity conflict resolution among gay familymen may provide data to fill these gaps and complete the SSR model.

CHAPTER SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

This chapter detailed the purpose and direction of the research. The three aims of the investigation are:

1. It attempts to develop from the social-psychological literature a heuristic model that specifies the process whereby people resolve identity conflicts and achieve a valid identity.

2. Selected for this research are gay familymen. The investigation seeks to discover how gay familymen, given their seemingly conflicting statuses of husband/father and homosexual, resolve identity conflicts and achieve a valid identity.

3. In combining the above two purposes, the research attempts to determine the fit between the model and the data and to use this knowledge to refine and extend the model.

Chapter One also presented a review and evaluation of the identity literature and culminated in proposing a closer look at the work of Strauss (1959), Stone (1962), and Rainwater (1970) for direction in developing a heuristic model of identity conflict and resolution.

Chapter Two describes the intellectual and empirical traditions that inform the works of Strauss, Stone, and Rainwater. Strands from their writings are brought together to synthesize a heuristic model of identity conflict and resolution. The strengths and weaknesses of the model are enumerated and ten questions are posed about areas of the model that remain vague. A plan to investigate these areas via research on gay familymen concludes the chapter.

Chapter Three summarizes what is published about gay familymen. This literature is criticized and promising lines of further inquiry are indicated. The chapter concludes with an operational definition of "gay familyman." Various components of the term are discussed, and the precise way in which it is employed in this dissertation.

Chapter Four is concerned with the methods of the research. Data collection and plan of analysis are discussed. Specifically, we state the rationale in selecting the gay familyman respondents, procedures employed in locating respondents, methods of life history depth interviewing, analysis of qualitative data, and the demographic characteristics of respondents.

Chapter Five reports findings on the initial stage of respondents' identity conflict and their attempts at resolving it. "Identity Disorientation" describes the first stage in the process toward acquiring a valid identity.

Chapter Six is concerned with the second stage, "Identity Marginality." The sociological features and personal adjustments characterizing this period are detailed.

Chapter Seven discusses the third stage toward identity conflict resolution, "Identity Affiliation." This stage characteristically involves dissolution of the marital bonds.

Chapter Eight is concerned with the fourth stage, "Identity Acceptance." At this stage, acculturation of the familymen into the gay world is analyzed.

Chapter Nine reports on the fifth stage, "Identity Affirmation." This chapter completes the developmental presentation of the stages experienced in resolving identity conflicts and in acquiring a valid identity. Throughout the developmental presentation, information is presented on the process whereby respondents develop changing answers to identity questions about their conflicting statuses. The identity "work" of each stage is described as are the social-psychological correlates that mark transitions across the stages.

Chapter Ten assesses the fit between the SSR model and the empirical data. The research findings are used to answer ten questions posed in Chapter Two about the SSR model. Suggestions for further research are presented, especially toward examining the heuristic value of the SSR model for explaining the identity conflict and resolution of other social aggregates.

NOTES

[1] A heuristic model is a vehicle to organize, guide and enhance discovery. While hypotheses may develop in employing the model, its purpose is to stimulate empirical research rather than to generate hypotheses *per se*.

[2] The process of moving back and forth between the heuristic model and the data for their mutual enhancement is a process recommended by Glaser and Strauss in their book, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (1967).

CHAPTER TWO

THE STRAUSS-STONE-RAINWATER MODEL OF IDENTITY

> Strauss argues that life is a process, and that process involves the most fundamental kind of change -- the change in identity.
>
> --Robert Lauer and Warren Handel
> (1977: 340)
> The Theory and Application of Symbolic Interactionism

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses, individually, the works of Strauss (1959), Stone (1962), and Rainwater (1970) as they relate to processes of identity conflict and resolution. Strands from each of their works are then combined to form and to synthesize a heuristic model. Strengths and weaknesses of the model are enumerated and ten questions are asked toward correcting and extending certain propositions of the model. The chapter concludes with an outline of how a study of the identity forming processes of gay familymen may serve to illuminate the SSR model and communicate to other social psychologists its potentialities for increased understanding of the processes involved in identity conflict and resolution.

ANSELM STRAUSS

Strauss, a student of Blumer who in turn was a student of Mead, roots his methodology, theorizing, and critiques within the processual perspective:

> To affirm process is to assume change as the essence of social reality. Indeed, it is not the lack of change that needs to be taken for granted, but change itself; and it is not change that needs to be explained but its specific directions (Strauss 1959: 43).

In his research, Strauss seeks to understand phenomena in terms of their movement, their development, their creative and emergent properties. Thus, in his study of psychiatric ideologies and hospitals, he assumes "organizational ideological change," and he attempts to explain "the directions of such change" (Strauss _et_ _al_. 1964: 17). Even in studying the phenomenon of death, Strauss views it as a process rather than simply as an event (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Moreover, Strauss consistently applies his concept of process to his analyses whether at the macro level of urban life (1968) or the micro level of individual development (1962).

Strauss' earliest book-length treatment on his ideas of process is _Mirrors and Masks_ (1959) where he discusses factors involved in transformations of identity. This subject matter is extended and updated in his later book, _Status Passage_ (1971), co-authored with Barney Glaser. It is important to point out that, in these two works, Strauss' emphasis on process is complex. To him, process is more than simple development. Process involves interaction as a creative process. Further, the personal histories of individuals interact with the social histories of groups; both the process of the individual's own life and those of the groups of which he is a part contribute to understanding his behavior.

In these works, Strauss is interested in the identity process from the perspectives of the actors involved. Thus he studies the perceived process rather than the actual course. This roots Strauss within the phenomenological approach.

One of Strauss' significant discussions on process is his description of "status passage." Following Arnold van Gennep's Rites of Passage (1908), Strauss defines "status passages" as important transitions, which occur in all our lives, impacting identity from one social position to another. Strauss tried to develop a formal theory about these passages, in order to show both how formal theory may be developed and to stimulate further research in status passages. Actually, his "theory" is primarily a detailed discussion of the concept itself. This is not to deny insights into the nature of status passage which are found in his work, but it does not constitute a theory; rather it is a rich development of a concept, a concept that inherently deals with process.

In summary, Strauss emphasizes the importance of researching various status passages to determine the "career line" or "trajectory" of the movement involved, the characteristics of phases of the movement, and the important variables along the way in affecting identity transformations. Further development of these ideas is discussed below in addressing Gregory Stone's work.

GREGORY STONE

In an article titled "Appearance and the Self" (1962), Stone assumes Strauss' challenge and attempts to apply his formulations to the meaning of appearance and the responses that appearances mobilize both with the self and with others. Stone, however, is critical of Strauss and other symbolic interactionists for the imprecision of their formulations and the difficulty of translating them into empirically verifiable statements. For our purposes, Stone makes two valuable contributions toward the development of a heuristic model of identity conflict and resolution. First, he outlines the various components of the term "identity":

> Identity establishes what and where the person is in social terms. When one has identity he is situated--that is, cast in the shape of a social object by the acknowledgement of his participation or membership in social relations. One's identity is established when others place him as a social object by assigning the same words of identity that he appropriates for himself or announces. It is in the coincidence of placements and announcements that identity becomes meaningful (Stone 1962: 93).

Second, Stone makes clear some of the social processes involved in identity acquisition. He says resolution of identity conflicts arises from the interaction between individuals and their environments (Stone 1962: 94). The individual acts in accord with the way he perceives himself and the surrounding world. The social structure regulates the array of behaviors that others may take toward him.

From his interaction with this social environment, he develops a perception of how he is regarded by others. These perceptions play a crucial role in the resolution of identity conflicts, as well as in the formation and maintenance of identity (1962: 87-94).

Unfortunately, Stone does not proceed to use this formulation to create a model of identity conflict resolution. Instead he offers an analysis of the role of appearance, clothing and uniforms, in interactions. He discusses their effects through the reflected image of others back on the self. Nevertheless, his contributions to the identity literature are significant, a fact realized by Lee Rainwater whose work is discussed below.

LEE RAINWATER

Rainwater credits both Strauss and Stone for his ideas on identity. First, knowledge of his relationship with Strauss helps in understanding the process of Rainwater's ideas. Not only are he and Strauss personal friends but also colleagues, having co-authored The Professional Scientist: A Study of American Chemists (1962).[1] In this work, they chart the career trajectory and status passages involved in becoming a professional chemist. Strauss says their ideas have been "stimulated and advanced" by each other.

For the purposes of this research, however, Rainwater's most significant work is his Behind Ghetto Walls (1970) where he describes the identity difficulties of blacks. In this work, Rainwater expands what he already developed with Strauss, incorporating also the ideas of Stone.

Taking a lead from Stone's definition of identity, Rainwater further refines the concept. Rainwater asserts that the achievement of identity comes about when a person gains "an assured sense of inner continuity and social sameness which bridges what he was and what he is about to become" and also "reconciles his conception of himself and his community's recognition of him" (1970: 374). Identity is self-realization coupled with mutual recognition from society. Consequently, Rainwater believes that identity is composed of three inter-related parts:

> A valid identity is one in which the individual finds congruence between who he feels he is, who he announces himself to be, and where he feels his society places him (1970: 375).

Rainwater's discussion of "identity conflict" is also important for the purposes of this research. He asserts that "maintenance of a valid identity is a life-long task, beginning in infancy and continuing until death" (1970: 374). Identity conflicts during this time involve the following:

> Internal or social pressures at any time can cause identity conflict in which the individual is forced to call into question the validity of the person he thought himself to be....One of the deepest anxieties human beings can experience occurs when identity conflict creates the loss of a sense of identity. Such a loss comes about either when there is a disjunction between the self being announced and the needs pressing for gratification or when the announced identity is not validated

> by others. In either case, the identity becomes invalid for the individual, once he recognizes the state of affairs. For a time he may not do so, resisting recognition with intrapsychic mechanisms in defense against internal invalidation or by self-delusion about social validation.

Two important points are contained in the above quotation. First, Rainwater recognizes that identity conflict is the result of disjunctions among the three components of identity and, second, he recognizes that the pain involved in identity conflict and identity invalidation leads some people to adopt defense mechanisms in attempting to resist its recognition. Rainwater follows with a particularly poignant example from his data of how these two points are manifested in the everyday lives of ghetto blacks:

> The world of the slum dweller is certainly one in which social and cultural processes do much to challenge identity and little to sustain it. Individuals are constantly exposed to evidence of their own irrelevance, and they experience much less guidance toward self-validation than do typical middle-class persons. The identity problems of lower-class persons make the soul-searching of middle-class adolescents and adults seem like a kind of conspicuous consumption of psychic riches (1970: 374).

Rainwater does not spell out the process of solving identity conflicts and valid identity, but he discusses some of the forces involved (1970: 377):

> Once an identity is recognized as invalid, the anxiety which descends upon the individual pushes him toward seeking another valid identity....Because a tenable life requires a sense of valid identity the individual has no other

> choice than to try again. If his efforts are outside the range of what is deemed culturally appropriate, he will be marked as deviant, but if he manages to formulate an identity and finds a group that validates it, even deviant life becomes tenable. This is the situation in which the lower-class person finds himself.

The importance of this quotation is that Rainwater places the motivation for identity conflict resolution in "anxiety" and recognizes that both conventional and "deviant" identities are tenable if they receive group support sufficient to relieve the anxiety and validate the identity. The next section brings together strands from the writings of the above sociologists toward the synthesis of a heuristic model of identity conflict and resolution.

TOWARD THE SYNTHESIS OF A HEURISTIC MODEL

Employing ideas developed by Strauss (1959), Stone (1962), and Rainwater (1970), tentatively proposed is the following heuristic model of identity conflict and resolution.

The basic unit of the model, and the source of stability and change of individual identity, is the following matrix. It consists of three elements.

1) Individual's perception of the applicability of a characteristic to himself. (Does this characteristic accurately describe me?)

2) Individual's perception of his public presentation with regard to that characteristic. (Considering the

characteristic, who do I announcement myself to be?)

3) Individual's perception of how others view him in light of that characteristic. (How do they react to me regarding that characteristic?)

What are the assumptions of the model? Its assumptions are consistent with the symbolic interactionist perspective and the writings of Strauss, Stone and Rainwater. Reality is assumed to be a socially constructed phenomenon, a realm in which meanings are problematic rather than given. Consequently, to have an "identity" is a trait peculiar to human beings. Resolving identity conflicts and developing an identity is a complex process which includes the ability to symbolize, to think abstractly, to interpret events and attitudes, to impute motives, and so on, in interaction with others (see, also, Cooley 1902; Thomas 1922; Mead 1934; Lindesmith and Strauss 1968).

A central idea of the model is that terminologies and beliefs about the nature of things, including identity, are acquired in the process of taking the role of the other and incorporating into personal perspectives the classifications, criteria, and evaluations of other people. The resolution of identity conflicts and the development of an identity, therefore, require the presence of intellectual tools or resources which aid people in their interpretations of, and conclusions about "what is going on." According to the SSR model, however, it is not what is going on that is fundamental, but rather what respondents perceive is "going on" that is relevant to identity conflict resolution and development of identity.[2] These factors are all assumed by the SSR model.

Additionally, the model assumes that stability and change in identities are dependent on the congruency that exists with an individual's perceptions of himself and his environment. It assumes a person may have a private view of himself different from the one he maintains publicly. Identity movement occurs when the individual attempts to resolve conflicts and inconsistencies in perceptions of his own feelings, behaviors, and others' assessments. Distinctions among the three components dissolve once congruency is reached and a valid identity is thereby achieved.

Why would a person want to remove inconsistency and conflicts in perceptions of self/others? According to Rainwater, persons with inconsistencies in perception between self and others experience painful confusion on a psychological level concerning who they are and interpersonal uneasiness, conflict, and interpersonal awkwardness on a social level. When the three components of the matrix are congruent, when the conflicts have been resolved, a valid identity is achieved and the above difficulties are lessened. At this point, the identity is valid to both the individual and the social audiences. The individual's self perceptions have been both personally and socially validated.

In short, within this matrix there is a recurring functional relationship among the three components. The components are analytically separable, but they form a whole that is connected by feedback loops. The criteria for a valid identity exist when the three parts of the matrix are congruent and identity conflicts are resolved. Homeostatic equilibrium among the matrix components, however, is problematic as personal feelings, others' perceptions, and social audiences change. Congruency maintenance, therefore, is held to be an ongoing task for people.

Can there be more than one "valid identity?" The SSR model does not answer this question directly. Its implication, however, is that a person may have many valid identities (a valid sexual identity, a valid racial identity, and so on), but within each of these categories there can be only one valid identity. For example, a person cannot simultaneously hold two valid sexual identities or two valid racial identities. This is an implication of the model, although none of its three authors states this explicitly.

What identity does an individual have when the three parts of the matrix are incongruent or in conflict with each other? At such a time, the person may claim several racial or sexual identities, each one possibly to a different audience. According to the model, however, such identities are not personally or publicly validated. Moreover, the person in question is likely to experience both intrapersonal and interpersonal uneasiness and conflict as a result of the situation. The resolution of these conflicts is the process of acquiring a valid identity.

Being in the symbolic interactionist framework, the model recognizes the importance of perceptions of significant others' views and the social nature of personal identity formation. In doing so, it stresses the crucial links between doing and being, incorporating a balance between determinism and volunteerism. Within a range of socially determined responses, a person may act to resolve or exacerbate identity conflicts and thereby promote or retard his identity development.

Ways of behaving may develop to a certain point without becoming fixed or stable, and without the development of "commitment" (Becker 1960: 32), until a person acquires an identity of which that kind of behavior is a component or expression of support. The model assumes, however, that identity is not "fixed" once and for all; rather identity conflict resolution and identity maintenance are problematic and involve ongoing negotiation over the life-span.

The model recognizes that identities may be operating at different levels. Although sociologically focused, the model is able to incorporate psychological elements and can thus be seen as a social-psychological model. Additionally, the model appears to be applicable to people with a wide range of demographic and social characteristics.

Questions Raised by the Model

In spite of these advantages, the model has some problems. Although the model maintains that congruency is acquired in stages (i.e. identity conflicts are resolved in stages), there is no discussion of the nature of this process. Strauss (1959: 91, 93, 109) refers to "series of related transformations," "critical incidents," "transforming incidents," and "sequences of steps." Stone (1962: 114, 116) refers to "turning points," and "stages." Rainwater (1970: 374) refers to terms used by the previous two writers.

There is, however, no information presented on the process whereby identity conflicts are resolved and a valid identity is achieved. For example:

1) What are the stages?

2) Are they discrete?

3) Are they experienced sequentially?

4) Do the stages follow one another inevitably?

5) Do they consume a particular time period?

6) May some steps be realized simultaneously, merged, glossed over, or bypassed?

7) May persons secede from the process without achieving congruency, while still experiencing identity conflict?

8) What combination of events (e.g. self definition) and conditions (e.g. subcultural involvement) correlate with each of the stages?

9) What events or conditions mark the transition from one stage to the next?

10) What factors (e.g. marital status, age) influence the pace by which identity congruence is achieved?

None of the authors discusses the possible stages or answers these related conceptual issues.

To make the model viable, the patterned sequences through which people move in achieving a valid identity (i.e. resolving identity conflicts) must be specified. To date, the sociological literature has not done this. With these issues in mind, a study of the identity formation of gay familymen (see Glossary in Appendix for definition) becomes relevant.

Identity Conflict Resolution and the Relevance of Gay Familymen

Gay familymen are a group from which data can be obtained that may help illustrate the SSR model of identity conflict resolution and provide insight into the ten questions asked above. Why is this population appropriate to study the stages of identity conflict resolution and identity formation? A key point in the foregoing model is that, before people can have a valid identity, they must have identity component congruence. Gay familymen, who also occupy statuses with conflicting demands, may be a group whose ability to achieve component congruence (i.e. resolve identity conflicts) is problematic, thus, the stages of this process may be clearly observable in such a population.

That is, gay familymen may have private views of themselves different from the ones they maintain publicly or that are publicly validated by others. By applying the SSR model of identity development to gay familymen, data from this group may shed light on the processes whereby persons achieve congruence, resolve identity conflicts, and attain a valid identity. The stages through which gay familymen achieve identity may illuminate the stages by which people in general achieve a valid identity and, thereby, complete the SSR model.

What is the nature of gay familymen's component incongruence and identity conflict? "Homosexual" and "spouse/parent" are identities that are "master-determining" to use Hughes' term (1971: 8). That is, they are major life-organizing identities. For example, people with familymen identities (spouse-parent identities) are generally heterosexual and organize lives consistent with expressing these identities. By contrast male homosexuals are generally not "familymen," but rather organize lives consistent with expressing homosexual identities. Identities of "familyman" and "homosexual" are typically not seen as compatible and may even be viewed as antagonistic.

It is instructive to detail how the SSR model applies to a research population who by operational definition (see Glossary in Appendix) are self-defined homosexuals, who presently are familymen, who have not relinquished either identity, and who concurrently maintain these two identities.

Links Between the Model and Data

Life-history, depth interviews with a purposive sample of fifty gay familymen are applied to the model in order to see what stages gay familymen pass through in resolving identity conflicts and in acquiring an identity. The interview protocols are searched for common stages identified by respondents in their achievement of identity component congruence. To discover this information, the data are questioned and guided by issues raised in the model. For example, these questions, among others, are asked: 1) "How did you come to see yourself as homosexual?" 2) "Regarding your sexuality, how did you try to come across to various groups?" 3) "How did others regard you sexually?"

When these questions are answered and the experiences distilled, the research notes are examined for indicators of respondent-identified stages experienced in achieving identity component congruence among the three part matrix (i.e. the stages of identity conflict resolution). By describing the respondent-identified stages through which gay familymen pass in resolving identity conflict and in achieving personal identity, deficiencies in the SSR model are addressed.

It is important to know what the patterned sequences are through which gay familymen move in the achievement of congruence and of a valid identity since these data are used to answer questions of the SSR model. Future testing of the model by others may determine if the gay familymen's stages of identity development have external validity, and also assess the heuristic value of the SSR model for explaining identity conflict and resolution of other groups.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has reviewed the works of Strauss (1959), Stone (1962), and Rainwater(1970) as they relate to the processes of identity conflict and resolution. Strands from each of their works are combined to form a heuristic model. The abilities of the model are assessed and ten questions are asked toward correcting and extending certain of its propositions. The latter part of the chapter proposes how a study of gay familymen and their identity forming processes may serve to elaborate the SSR model and increase our understanding of the processes involved in identity conflict resolution.

The next chapter begins the gay familyman research by reviewing the literature in the area and defining terms to be employed in the investigation.

NOTES

[1] In a personal interview with Strauss on March 31, 1983, Strauss related his close association with Rainwater. They regularly vacation together with their families at Rainwater's home in the south of France. Strauss is proud of the work he has done with Rainwater and says the cross-fertilization of ideas has been beneficial to them both.

[2] An empirical example of the importance of perception in identity development and its implications for behavior is found in the research by Quarantelli and Cooper (1966). They found the performance of dental students more closely related to their perceptions of how others see them than to how others actually regard them.

CHAPTER THREE

GAY FAMILYMEN: LITERATURE REVIEW AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

> [Homosexuals] are suffering from a psychological disturbance and none of them can ever find the happiness of raising their own family.
>
> --J. Dawkins, Ph.D. (1967: 76, emphasis added)
> Textbook of Sex Education

INTRODUCTION

Until recently, few sociologists carried out research on familymen of any sort, let alone gay familymen. (Some, like Dr. Dawkins who is quoted above, may doubt gay familymen's existence.) Safilios-Rothschild (1969: 290) complains that sociologists have so seldom researched fathering, "the sociology of the family" should be renamed "the sociology of wives and mothers." Her statement is somewhat of an exaggeration. Although there are fewer books on fathers than on mothers, many studies touch on fathers as part of larger projects (e.g., poverty, ethnicity). Liebow, for example, studied black fathers (1967), Rainwater studied working-class fathers (1960, 1965), and Thomas and Znaniecki studied Polish immigrant fathers (1918-20).

In addition, Benson (1968) published a summary of research upon the father citing several hundred empirical works. Perhaps Safilios-Rothschild meant to say that sociology disproportionately studies mothers instead of fathers, and her point is well-taken. Regardless, considerable literature now exists on fathers (Rapoport, et al.1977; Lamb 1976; Green 1977; Biller 1971, 1974; Biller and Meredith 1974). In particular, Lynn (1974) and Hamilton (1977) provide overviews of approximately 700 social-scientific works on fathers and their role in child development. Besides the increase in the number of works about fathers, there is an increase in special studies of particular kinds of fathers: divorced fathers (Gardner 1979), part-time fathers (Atkin and Rubin 1976), single-parent fathers (Keshet and Rosenthal 1980; Gatley and Koulack 1979), custody fathers (Victor and Winkler 1977).

The present study of gay familymen continues and expands a recent trend in social-scientific research that documents various subcategories of familymen. This chapter summarizes what has been published about gay familymen, it reviews and discusses this literature, and it indicates promising paths of research. With these considerations in mind the chapter concludes with an operational definition of "gay familymen." Various components of the term are discussed, as is the precise way in which it is employed in the present work.

STUDIES OF GAY FAMILYMEN

When the present research was begun, no sociological investigations were published specifically on gay familymen. Ideally, the sociological study of the family should be equally concerned with all components of the family and its relationships. In reality, study of the family has focused on some topics and ignored others. For example, premarital sex among university students and the activities of delinquent youth gangs have generated an amount of research disproportionate to their numbers in the nation.

Although one in every four American families includes at least one homosexual member (Bell, Weinberg, and Hammersmith 1981: 2), the impact of homosexuality on family life has been seldom investigated. Bryant and Wells (1973: 395), in their paper on the concealment of deviance in the family, state: "Unfortunately, little research has been done on the impact of homosexual disclosure on marital and family relationships."

Four reasons can be advanced for the neglect of the study of gay familymen. First, topics selected for study ordinarily reflect the preferences and interests of social scientists. The omission may be due simply to random oversight, or it may involve "selective inatttention" in that "persistent avoidance by a group of scholars of pertinent topics is not purely or chiefly accidental" (Dexter 1958: 176). Social scientists may have neglected the topic of gay familymen because it never occurred to them to research the area since it is outside their area of interest.

A second reason for the neglect of gay familymen research is that there has been a tendency to study persons with exclusive sexual orientations to the neglect of those, like gay familymen, who engage in sexual behavior with both sexes. The study of gay familymen is per se problematic since their behavior violates established norms, has been carried out secretly, and has existed without official recognition.

A third reason for neglect of the study of gay familymen may be the belief that the family exclusively satisfies the members' emotional needs. Pagelow (1981), Henslin (1970), and Gil (1971), who respectively have studied spouse beating, the families of suicide victims, and child abuse, report data difficult to obtain -- not because such behavior is rare, but because the phenomena show some families to be inadequate, contradicting preferred ideology about family life. We suggest that the topic of gay familymen may raise similar issues and this may account for its scholarly neglect.

A fourth possible reason for the neglect of gay familymen is that not only are they stigmatized, but the stigma may rub off on those who choose to study them. Many sociologists look at investigations of homosexual populations as illegitimate pursuits, and popular definitions deter scholars from proceeding with such work (SSSP Task Force Report on Homosexuality 1980). As with research on women and on ethnic groups, some people have dismissed gay research as lacking intellectual significance and as a narrow area of study pursued by partisan academics. The present study is part of a growing movement (ASA Task Group Report on Homosexuality 1981; SSSP Task Force Report on Homosexuality 1980; Plummer 1981 17-29, 211-230) that challenges this perception and demonstrates the importance of gay studies for the field of sociology in general.

The lack of attention paid to gay familymen by social scientists has been unfortunate from several perspectives. In addition to being a relevant and significant topic in its own right, the study of gay familymen is also of theoretical and practical importance. Such research provides an opportunity to investigate the phenomena of adult resocialization (Miller 1983), mixed marriages, and the impact of secrecy on family relations. Practically, research on gay familymen may provide courts with the necessary data for the fair adjudication of custody cases involving gay familymen. (These topics, however, are outside the focus of this dissertation.)

Another practical implication of research on gay familymen is that it may make investigators of homosexuals cognizant of more precise research designs. For example, Dr. L. Hatterer (1970) claims to have cured homosexuals -- the proof of this being that they subsequently married heterosexual women. Bergler (1959: 4) defines homosexuality as completely separate and distinct from heterosexuality. The implication is that men who have married or fathered a child cannot be genuinely homosexual. Mathes (1966) takes a similar position. She presumes that a sample of married men provides an adequate heterosexual control group for a sample of gay men. Information on gay familymen may increase investigators' awareness that spouse/parent and gay are not mutually exclusive persons, but different roles that the same person can play.

The literature that exists about gay familymen can be grouped into four categories: 1) psychiatric case histories, 2) anecdotal-personal accounts, and 3) scholarly studies that briefly mention gay familymen in moving on to more general surveys of homosexuality. The fourth category includes four empirical studies, three of which discuss gay husbands and one of which discusses gay familymen, the latter completed recently for a doctorate in nursing. The literature in these categories is reviewed and its implications for the present study noted below.

1) Psychiatric Studies of Gay Familymen

Psychiatric studies relating to gay familymen consist of the following: Allen 1957; Bieber 1969; Imielinski 1969; Weeks, Derdeyn, and Langman 1975; Awad 1976; Rifkin 1968. Without detailing each of these articles separately, general comments suffice to summarize their style and substance. These studies primarily address gay husbands; only two deal with gay fathers (Awad 1976; Weeks, Derdeyn, and Langman 1975). The studies on gay fathers have only one respondent each, while the sample size of the others ranges to a high of six respondents. Generalizations from such small sample sizes are problematic. None of the articles presents the demographic characteristics of the sample, although it is likely that the populations are biased in favor of middle to upper-middle class men, since all respondents were contacted through the authors' private psychiatric facilities. In short, the samples are atypical of gay familymen; and results from such small, skewed samples need to be interpreted cautiously.

Most of the articles describe how the men came to marry and their subsequent marital difficulties. It must be stated, however, that the articles are typically brief, with a mean length of five pages, so there is little room for anything except sketchy, superficial descriptions.

The central finding of these studies is that gay familymen lead unhappy, tension-filled lives and that there is considerable psychopathology among this population. The "finding" of psychiatric difficulties, however, is not a genuine "finding," since the samples were drawn from psychiatric practices. Any group, gay or straight, selected from such a source would be expected to evidence psychopathology. The authors fail to mention this seemingly obvious limitation. Without a matched control group of heterosexual familymen in psychotherapy, the clinicians cannot say that gay familymen evidence disproportionate psychopathology.

The articles conclude with recommendations for therapy and comments on therapeutic effectiveness. Conspicuously absent from these studies are data on wives and children, their reactions, and their effect on the gay familymen's adjustments.

2) Personal Accounts of Gay Familymen

Of the four literature categories, "personal accounts" has the greatest number of references. Some of the personal accounts of gay familymen include: Anonymous 1979; Brown 1976; Babuscio 1977; Clark 1977, 1979; Giteck 1979; Keith 1974; Lynch 1978; Miller 1975; Standeford 1978; Voeller and Walters 1978; Willenbecher 1979; Gay Fathers of Toronto 1981.

This category also contains the most sources for which the authors are anonymous or pseudonymous -- one indication of the perceived stigma surrounding the status of gay familymen. The style of this literature is anecdotal and autobiographical. It varies between a "sob-story"/ confessional tone and an editorial/polemical tone. While many of the experiences are highly idiosyncratic, patterns do emerge: early confusion about sexual orientation, negative experiences with homosexuality, initially happy marriages turning painful with the increase of homosexual feelings and behaviors, the strain of living a double life, psychiatric and legal difficulties resulting from homosexuality, problematic homosexual love affairs, gradual emergence from the closet, renegotiation or termination of the marital contract, building a gay life after divorce and difficulties in integrating homosexuality with father roles. Reactions of wives and children (seen through the eyes of the gay familymen) are typically included, features missing from other literature. At the conclusion of the articles, there is often a list of self-help tips for similarly situated readers and a statement of recommendations for social policy change to alleviate gay familymen's difficulties.

The chief contribution of personal account articles about gay familymen is their wealth of detail about the life situations and coping strategies of these men, revealing the texture of their lives. One of the most articulate accounts, that summarizes the gist of preceeding articles, is that by Voeller and Walters (1978). Voeller, a Ph.D. biologist, Executive Director of the National Gay Task Force, and a gay father of three children, talks with the editor of The Family Coordinator on views of gay familymen. Speaking from his own experience, Voeller asserts: a) gay fathers are not bisexual, b) homosexual men are less monogamous than homosexual women and more successful in their sexual efforts than heterosexual men, whether parenting or not, c) children should be raised to be nonprejudiced and nonjudgmental toward homosexuals, d) homosexuals can accept homosexuality in their progeny more easily than heterosexuals, e) most gay fathers are still married and their spouses do not know they are gay, f) screening out homosexuals is commonplace in foster care, adoption, and custody proceedings, g) children of homosexuals are not more likely to be gay themselves, h) there can be greater openness between children and their gay parents than that found between children and heterosexual parents.

In summary, the personal accounts literature is much like the psychiatric literature in that both work from small sample sizes and have definite political biases. The chief advantage of the personal accounts literature over the psychiatric literature is the greater quantity and quality of detail in the former.

3) Scholarly Studies That Mention Gay Familymen

Scholarly studies that mention gay familymen are limited to the following sources: Saghir and Robins 1973; Schofield 1965; Hemphill _et al_. 1958; Dank 1974; Westwood 1960; Henry 1965; Lautmann 1980; Gebhard and Johnson 1979; Bell and Weinberg 1978; Spada 1979; Jay and Young 1979; APA Task Force 1979; Humphreys 1975; Troiden 1974.

These are not studies of gay familymen _per se_, but rather surveys on other aspects of homosexuality that included questions on respondents' experiences with marriage and parenting. The extent of their comment on gay familymen is limited to a sentence or, at most, two pages. Typically, the researchers simply recite what percentage of their respondents are married or parenting children, without offering details. A capsule summary of each of these studies gives an idea of their contribution to the area of gay familymen.[1]

Hemphill _et al_. (1958), studying British homosexual prisoners, found 40 per cent of them had married one or more times. No data are presented on what percentage were fathers. Henry (1965), studying American homosexual patients and prisoners, found 11.7 per cent (N=384) married one or more times. No data are given on their role as fathers. Gebhard and Johnson (1979: 491), reworking the Kinsey (1948) data, found 29.97 per cent of the white sample and 47 per cent of the non-white sample of self-identified homosexuals had experienced marriage. Dank's (1974) questionnaires with young homosexuals in Los Angeles in the late 1960's found 25 per cent were married. Spada (1979), in an American survey, found 17.4 per cent of homosexuals had married. Weinberg and Williams (1974) found 13.3 per cent of their American sample of gay bar patrons had experienced marriage. Schofield (1965), in a British study of homosexual patients and prisoners, found 20 per cent heterosexually married. Harry's (1982) study of Chicago gays found 16 per cent married. Evans' (1969) study of 43 men from a Los Angeles gay organization found 5 per cent married. As shown in Table 1, none of the above researchers report what percentage of respondents were fathers.

Research that reports on the number of gay respondents, both married and parents, includes the following. Westwood (1960) in interviews with British homosexuals found eight per cent married, and 40 per cent of these were fathers. Saghir and Robins (1973) in their questionnaire study with members of American gay organizations found 18 per cent married, 44 per cent of whom became fathers. Lautmann (1980: 150), studying records of homosexuals in Nazi concentration camps, found "at least 16 per cent" previously married (N=705) and approximately 15 per cent had one or more children. The Gay Task Force of the American Psychological Association (1979: 31), studying gay male members (N=137), found 18.1 per cent married (N=25) and 13.9 per cent fathers (N=19). Gay familymen with legal custody comprised 68.8 per cent (N=11) of those gay fathers. Jay and Young (1979) in questionnaires with a national American sample of gays found 18 per cent married (N=779) and 13 per cent fathers (N=562). An additional 12 per cent participate in raising children even though these men are not married or the children's biological fathers. Bell and Weinberg (1978) in their interview study of San Francisco gays in 1969 found 20 per cent married (N=115) and 15 per cent had been married two or more times (N=17). Of the married respondents, 50 per cent had one or more children (N=58). Typically, only the more openly identified gay familymen are available for studies of this sort; unknown numbers of others remain untapped by such research.

Studies of covert homosexuals suggest that an even greater percentage of them may be familymen. Humphreys (1975) reports that 54 per cent (N=27) of his sample of tearoom participants are married and 50 per cent (N=25) are fathers. Troiden (1974) finds that 56 per cent (N=28) of men having sex at a highway reststop are married and "at least" 42 per cent (N=21) of them are fathers. Brown (1976: 130) believes the majority of gay familymen remain hidden. A possible reason for their covertness is the stigma attached to their status. Fear of stigma is evidenced

Table 1

PERCENTAGE OF HOMOSEXUAL SAMPLES WHO ARE FAMILYMEN

Researchers (1958-82)	Per Cent Married	Per Cent Fathers
Hemphill *et al*. 1958	40	--
Westwood 1960	8	3.2
Henry 1965	11.7	--
Schofield 1965	20	--
Evans 1969	5	--
Saghir and Robins 1973	18	8
Weinberg and Williams 1974	13.3	--
Dank 1974	25	--
Troiden 1974	56	42
Humphreys 1975	54	50
Bell and Weinberg 1978	20	--
Jay and Young 1979	18	13
APA Task Force 1979	18.1	13.9
Spada 1979	17.4	--
Gebhard and Johnson 1979	29.97 (white)	--
	47.00 (non-white)	--
Lautmann 1980	16	15
Harry 1982	16	--

by the relatively large number of articles on the men and their families that are authored anonymously or pseudonymously (see References).

The only study located that gives a percentage of the incidence of gay familymen in a nation comes from Deggeller _et_ _al_. (1969). In a random sample of the total Dutch population, they found 1.3 per cent of married men report to be "exclusively homosexual." All figures about the number of gay familymen on this continent are necessarily guesses, although the National Gay Task Force using census data estimates, in America, there are three million gay husbands and fathers. This figure waits to be corroborated by further data.

What conclusions can be tentatively drawn from this material? First, according to these studies, 5 to 56 per cent of homosexual samples are or have been heterosexually married, and 3.2 to 50 per cent of homosexual samples are fathers. Second, the wide variation in the proportion of the samples that are gay familymen can be explained by the source and demographics of the samples. For example, samples with more covert homosexuals have larger percentages of gay familymen than ones drawn from overt homosexual groups. Ironically, samples from homophile organizations tend to have smaller percentages of gay familymen than samples gathered from locales that are not specifically gay. Samples from tearooms (Humphreys 1975), parks (Delph 1978), truckstops (Troiden 1974), and prisons (Hemphill _et_ _al_. 1958) have larger proportions of gay familymen than samples from overtly gay networks (Jay and Young 1979; Spada 1979). Third, the younger the mean age of the sample, the fewer gay familymen respondents (Westwood 1960; Dank 1974). Fourth, the larger the proportion of non-white homosexuals in the sample, the greater the percentage of gay familymen respondents (Hemphill 1958; Gebhard and Johnson 1979). In short, compared to other homosexuals, gay familymen tend to be more covert, older, non-white, and found in marginally gay settings. Because the samples on which these results are based are flawed, conclusions should be seen as only suggestive.

4) Social Scientific Literature on Gay Familymen

Studies that directly discuss gay familymen include the following: Ross 1971, 1972, 1979; Latham and White 1978; Bozette 1979, 1980. Each will be discussed below.

In the late 1960's, Laurence Ross, an American sociologist, spent a sabbatical in Belgium, during which time he interviewed ten married homosexuals. He does not provide data on how many were fathers. The purpose of the study was to describe how the men adjust to married life. Ross concludes most marriages were based on a failure of both the husband and wife at the time of marriage to define the homosexual partner as such. Admitted homosexuals married because of social pressures, as a flight from homosexuality, or on commitment to a home-centered life. Conflict tended to develop over declining sexual attention and the formation of outside relationships. Three modes of adjustment are identified that avoid separation: "platonic marriage," "double-standard marriage," and "innovative (open) marriage." Ross concludes these adjustments are not effective, being compromised by the conventionality of the respondents, whose commitment to a traditional morality yields both marital stability and marital unhappiness.

Using the same data, Ross wrote a second article (1972) on the topic, publishing this one, not in a sociology journal, but in a popular format magazine. This article covers the same material as the first with slightly more descriptive data and added policy recommendations. Despite the small sample size, Ross' study makes a contribution to the literature. Its main limitation for the purpose of this dissertation is that it fails to discuss the father aspect of the gay familyman status.

Michael Ross, an Australian psychiatrist, conducted a study to discover why some gay men marry. He questionnaired 21 homosexual males still married and living with their wives and 21 homosexual males separated, divorced, or widowed. He matched them to a control group of never-married homosexuals, although Ross admits the matching was methodologically imprecise. All groups were given Weinberg and Williams' questionnaire. Results indicated, not surprisingly given socially approved responses, the main reason for marrying was "being in love." However, Ross gives no statistics on how this reason varied across groups. Another reason for marrying, according to Ross, is perceived hostile reaction to homosexuality. Ross gives no ranking for how important this reason was to respondents, but presumably it was somewhat important since he spends most of the paper discussing it. The strongest negative expectation was presented by respondents who remained married; it was weakest for those who never married. No statistics are given, however, on the magnitude of the difference. Ross concludes with recommendations for therapists treating married homosexuals. His main point is that "desensitization of fear of negative societal consequences may be necessary before an individual can live with his sexual orientation" (1979: 151). Similar to the Laurence Ross paper, Michael Ross' paper has limited relevance for this research since he does not deal with identity issues or discuss the father aspect of the gay familyman status.

Latham and White (1978), two California psychologists, interviewed five couples where the husband was homosexual and where the wife was cognizant of this fact. The researchers wanted to discover the coping mechanisms whereby the couples kept their marriages intact. Another purpose of the study was to challenge the findings of previous studies that suggest a poor prognosis for marriages between gay men and straight women. The average length of marriage for the couples studied was 12.6 years, and all except one couple had children. The prime coping mechanism for these upper-middle class couples was sexually open marriages, buttressed by a liberal/bohemian ideology. This coping mechanism was not particularly successful, judging from the extensive therapy and numerous trial separations of the respondents, although the paper glosses over the couples' difficulties. Recent private communication with Latham confirms this suspicion. Since the paper was written, all but one of the couples have divorced; and the wife who remains married to her gay husband is a "severe alcoholic." This experience suggests the need for longitudinal data on the marriages of gay men and cautions against premature evaluations of marital viability. Like the other studies discussed in this section, this paper is also inadequate for the purpose of this dissertation since it does not discuss identity material or the fathering aspect of the gay familyman status.

The final research to be discussed here is that by Bozette (1979), completed for a doctorate in nursing. Bozette interviewed 18 gay fathers in San Francisco. His results are largely descriptive and policy oriented, making the point that the medical profession is often insensitive to the needs of gay familymen. Using the notion of "integrative sanctioning," Bozette shows how "nurses and other health workers" can aid the adjustment of gay familymen. In articles published subsequent to the dissertation (1980; 1981a,b; 1982) Bozette gives gay fathers tips on how to "come out" successfully to their children and how to handle their reactions. Bozette's work is more relevant than any other cited here for the purposes of this dissertation. The largely descriptive nature of his study, however, limits its theoretical utility for insight into identity component congruence among gay familymen. Moreover, his small sample of gay familymen (N=18) is composed largely of politically sophisticated San Francisco gays, probably an atypical part of the larger gay familyman population.

In summary, there is considerable literature that relates at least tangentially to gay familymen.[2] Although much of it is flawed for the purposes of the present research, it presents a history of the growing interest in this topic. As we have seen, a sizeable number of men in gay samples have been married, from 5 to 56 per cent, and the number who are fathers ranges from 3.2 to 50 per cent. A general finding in the literature is that gay familymen have unhappy, unstable marriages and that hiding homosexuality is a major concern of those who remain wed.

Literature on gay familymen's relationships with children is comparatively rare. Fear of rejection by children and custody difficulties are major reasons gay familymen remain covert. Finally, the literature is descriptive and gives little analysis of the identity difficulties of gay familymen. However, this literature review provides insight to construct operational definitions for terms to be employed in this dissertation.

AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF "GAY FAMILYMAN"

In formulating a working operational definition of "gay familyman," we take six aspects of this status into account: the problem of defining "gay" as contrasted with "homosexual," temporary versus permanent homosexuality, bisexual considerations, never married versus married considerations, social versus biological considerations, and the salience of familyman status.[3]

The Problem of Defining "Gay" Versus "Homosexual"

To date there is no definition of "homosexual" upon which all researchers agree. The following dimensions have variously been employed, singly and in combination, to assess homosexual orientation: psychiatric assessment (Bieber _et_ _al_. 1962; Hatterer 1970); phalometer response to erotic slides (Feldman and MacCulloch 1971; Freund _et_ _al_. 1973); MMPI measurement (Loney 1971; Manosevitz 1970); dishonorable military discharge (Chiles 1972; Williams and Weinberg 1971); convictions for same-sex sexual offenses (Gebhard _et_ _al_. 1965; Wolfenden 1956); biochemical analysis (Kolodny _et_ _al_. 1971; Brodie _et_ _al_. 1974); membership in homophile organizations (Saghir and Robins 1973; Harry and DeVall 1978); relative quantity of same-sex sexual behavior over time (Kinsey 1948, 1952). In addition, it might be possible to define homosexuals on the basis of sexual fantasy, cultural identification, or affectional attachment (Goode and Troiden 1974: 150-155).

There are difficulties, however, with each of these means of identifying homosexuals. Gagnon (1977: 261) takes particular exception to the methods that involve orgasm and act counting:

> Physiological (sex) events are no more (and often less) important as indicators of what people are experiencing than the statements people make about what they (sexually) feel or think. The biological prejudices of Kinsey led him to decide that physiological events both determine and are more important than the felt experiences of individuals. Some limitations of orgasm or act counting (to determine sexual orientation) can be suggested in the following ways:
>
> 1. Comparing different amounts of activities: If a person has sex ninety times with a woman and ninety times with a man, is it the same as a person who has sex nine times with a woman and nine times with a man?
>
> 2. Comparing different mixtures of people and activities: What if a person has sex twenty times each with five different women and five times each with twenty different men?
>
> 3. Comparing motivation with acts: What if a person has sex with ninety men one time each for money and ninety times with one woman for love?
>
> 4. Comparing fantasies with sex acts: What if someone masturbates to orgasm fifty times thinking of one woman and has sex with five men each ten times?
>
> 5. Thinking about one thing and doing another: What if a person has sex twenty times with twenty people and thinks of the opposite sex half the time?
>
> 6. Sex acts with and without orgasm: What if a person has sex twenty times with twenty people and has orgasm half the time, and another person has sex twenty times with twenty people and has no orgasms?
>
> Depending on how you count, it may all look like bisexuality (or heterosexuality or homosexuality). But what results is adding up apples and oranges, mangos, cucumbers, carrots, and artichokes.

The point of this long quotation is to emphasize Gagnon's contention: defining (homo)sexual orientation is problematic, and there are no easy solutions.

To circumvent these difficulties in counting and in the definition of terms, only those familymen who identified themselves as homosexual were selected. Undoubtedly, there was variation in the respondents' subjective meanings of the term, and there is no ultimate defense for this procedure. Given homosexuality's definitional problems, however, and the nature of the identity theory employed in this study, we believe that the respondent's own sexual identification is an appropriate criterion for operationalizing this facet of the research. Moreover, the respondent's self-definition has been used successfully in sample selection for other gay research: Warren 1974; Hooker 1965; Hoffman 1968; Dank 1974. Like Lindesmith (1947), we consider self-definition within the respondents' own frame of reference to be a centrally important criterion.

Following Bell and Weinberg (1978), we asked the men to rank themselves on a combination of the four Kinsey (1948: 638) sub-scales. (See Appendix.) The scales were not used in identity assessment of respondents but only to determine the past and present mix of their hetero-to-homosexual fantasies and actions. (See Shively and DeCecco 1977).

It should also be pointed out that some researchers (e.g., Thorp 1972) make a distinction between the terms "homosexual" and "gay." The "homosexual" evidences same-sex erotic behavior and orientation, while the "gay" person also identifies and associates with a community of like-minded individuals. Although this is a useful distinction for some purposes, it is not always possible to separate people into either one category or another; consequently, in this dissertation, the terms "homosexual" and "gay" are used interchangeably.

Temporary Versus Permanent Homosexuality

There is no way to select with assurance a sample of gay persons who will remain so throughout the rest of their lives. All respondents have been neither homosexual nor heterosexual exclusively. Every respondent has a history of serial ambisexuality. At the time of the initial interview, however, each identified himself as homosexual.

Bisexual Considerations

Definitions of bisexuality are as problematic as those of homosexuality. (See Glossary in Appendix.) Even researchers who agree on using the Kinsey scale (1948) as a measuring instrument disagree on what Kinsey categories to include. Kinsey defined all those who are "3" on the scale as "bisexual." Masters and Johnson (1979), however, define all those who are "2," "3," and "4" on the scale as "bisexual." Klein (1978) defines all who are "1" to "5" on the scale as "bisexual." There is no consensus among researchers on this issue.

Although the respondents in this study may have held bisexual identities during periods of their lives, they must have relinquished this identity in order to have been included in the present work. Since this is research on gay familymen, it is important that the respondents identify themselves as gay, not as bisexual. Bisexual familymen may be a legitimate focus of study but not here.

Never Married Versus Ever Married Considerations

For the purposes of the present research, all respondents are or have been heterosexually married. Although during the course of the research we encountered avant-garde, never-married gay men who became fathers in uncommon ways (e.g., by siring black-market babies, providing artificial insemination for a paid woman), they are excluded from the present sample. These men might be considered "familymen," but their inclusion in the sample would have unnecessarily widened the definition. Persons qualified as respondents only if they had been heterosexually married at least once and had become fathers.

Social Versus Biological Considerations

For the purpose of the present research, an essential dimension in the distinction between a familyman and a non-familyman is whether or not a person has assumed the social role of a parent. It is irrelevant whether or not the respondent has been a biological parent. A familyman is defined as one who has parented a child and has assumed the social role of father. Thus, males who have been involved in the birth of a child who died a few days after birth or who was immediately placed for adoption are not familymen. Conversely, men who have assumed the role of adoptive parents or step-parents are considered to be fathers.

Salience of Familyman Status

There is a variety of familyman styles, some of which involve more intense father-child interaction than others. Since the familyman role is an important one in this research, it is crucial that respondents have more than peripheral involvement in it. There is some truth in the statement, "Once a parent, always a parent," but it is also true that the salience of the parental role diminishes considerably once the children pass adolescence, after the parent and child no longer live together, or if the parental role has been performed but briefly. Consequently, for the purposes of this research a familyman is considered to be a person who has performed the paternal role by living with a preadolescent or adolescent child for at least five years. Although these criteria are restrictive, they err on the side of conservatism in finding respondents that most people might agree to be genuine familymen.

This decision was made after the following incident occurred early in the research: A seventy-five-year-old gay man married for the first time. His wife was a widow who had a grown daughter from a previous marriage. The gay man saw his new step-daughter "two weekends per year." Since he knew the sample included gay familymen who are step-parents, he wondered if he qualified to be interviewed. By the above criteria, he did not. It was clear that he had never occupied the familyman status as herein defined.

Within the sample, there are three familyman styles: 1) those living with wife and children, 2) those living with children full- or part-time, but apart from wives, and 3) those living apart from both wives and children but who exercise visiting rights to their children.

Summary Guidelines for Selection of the Sample

Taking into account the foregoing dimensions of gay familyman status, the following guidelines were established for the selection of men to be interviewed: the person would affirm that he is homosexual. He would have been married, at least once, to a woman. He would have become a father and assumed the social role of father by living with an adolescent or preadolescent child for at least five years. No exceptions to these criteria were allowed.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has reviewed the literature on gay familyman and defined the terms to be employed in this dissertation. Specifically, an explanation has been given for the neglect of the study of gay familymen. Next the literature on gay familymen has been reviewed under four categories: psychiatric case histories; personal accounts; scholarly studies of homosexuality that mention gay familymen in passing; and four empirical studies, three that discuss gay husbands and one that discusses gay familymen directly. Central deficiencies in the literature include small sample sizes, evident bias, an avoidance of theoretical issues, a concentration on the role of husband, not parent. These deficiencies limit the relevance of the research cited for present purposes.

The latter part of the chapter has presented an operational definition of gay familyman. Various aspects of the term have been explained and it has been shown how they affect the research procedure. The chapter concludes with the eligibility criteria for the selection of the gay familyman sample. In the next chapter, we[4] detail the methods of data collection and the plan of analysis.

NOTES

[1] In a half humorous critique of homosexual samples, W. Dorr Legg, founder of ONE, Inc., the oldest surviving gay organization in the United States, comments, "The gays are either from prison, from analysis, or from California" (personal communication, January 1979).

[2] Besides the literature reviewed here, there is considerable ancillary data of relevance to gay familymen. For example, there is literature on the wives' experience with gay familymen and on the experiences of single gays with gay familymen. Some of the material on wives of gay men include: Anderson 1977; Anonymous 1976, 1977; Hennegan 1978, Warren 1977. Like the personal accounts literature, these works have an autobiographical style. A central theme of this material is the difficulty in adjusting to a homosexual spouse.

Two recent books (Malone 1980; Nahas and Turley 1979) and a number of magazine articles (Pliner and Kleinberg 1979; Stone 1981; Kay and Weiner 1981) discuss relationships between straight women and gay men. Although they touch on the issues of gay familymen, it is peripheral to their discussion of relationships between single, heterosexual women and single gay men, a phenomenon pejoratively referred to as "fag hagging." Discussion of this issue is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Literature on the experiences of single gays with gay familymen is limited to Kinsey's 1948 research. He asked his homosexual male sample how many of their sexual partners were married. Thirty per cent of the sample said none of their partners were married. Fifty per cent said they had 1-9 partners who were married and 20 per cent said they had 10 or more partners who were married (Gebhard and Johnson 1979: 516). This gives some indication that the size of the gay familyman population is large enough to comprise a major source of sexual partners for single gays.

[3] The term "family" is an emotion-laden term subject to several definitions depending on one's value orientation. This dissertation defines "family" according to Bell (1971: 6):

> ...the family is a system of behaviors (acts, communications, meanings, feelings) which arises among people who relate to each other primarily in terms of the statuses of husband-wife or parent-child.

[4] Throughout this dissertation, the editorial "we" is used, although it should be understood that the only researcher was the author.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION AND PLAN OF ANALYSIS

> The experience gained here suggests that it would be more advantageous to focus upon a smaller number of respondents in greater depth and to place more emphasis upon indepth and unstructured interviews. By approaching the topic in this way we should be better able to uncover concerns of respondents which may have been overlooked by structured self-report questionnaires as well as being better prepared to understand the temporal sequences involved in building and handling gay careers. Knowledge about these processes can only come through a detailed examination of life histories.
>
> --Neil Lindquist (1976: 149)
> Adaptation to Marginal Status

INTRODUCTION

This research is based on data collected from a sample of 50 gay familymen. From 1976 to 1980 life-historical, depth interviews were conducted with multiple-source, chain-referral samples in Canada and in the United States. In order to contact these uncommon persons, unusual sampling procedures were employed. In this chapter we discuss the approach under five headings: rationale in selecting the gay familyman respondents; procedures used in locating respondents; processes involved in life-history, depth interviewing; analysis and limitations of the data; and demographic descriptions of respondents.

RATIONALE FOR THE NATURE OF THE SAMPLE SELECTION

Problems in Sample Selection

The phenomenon of gay familymen requires that unconventional techniques for sample selection be employed. At least five problems are involved in sampling this difficult population: First, gay familymen are statistically rare, certainly constituting fewer than one per cent of the general population. Second, the status of gay familymen is not ordinarily visible. Consequently, if a researcher meets a prospective respondent, he is unlikely to know it. These first two issues constitute important problems: "...the subject group should be both large in numbers and highly visible if the researcher is to obtain his subjects with ease" (Sagarin 1975: 231). Since gay familymen conform to neither of these criteria, one can expect difficulties in finding a representative sample.

Ideally, the method of locating people who have low visibility because of stigmatized traits is to draw a representative sample of all fathers in the population, then screen the sample to locate and interview the gay familymen. This method is excluded because it would obviously be uneconomical.

A third difficulty involved in sampling gay familymen is that, when the present research was begun in 1976, no empirical work had been reported on gay familymen. We were forced to proceed *de novo*.

Fourth, not only is homosexual behavior stigmatized (even illegal still in 26 American states) but, combined with fatherhood, it may be perceived as especially immoral, abnormal, or irresponsible. To the extent that gay familymen perceive community disapproval and that negative characteristics are attributed to them, they might be reluctant to come forward to acknowledge their socially unacceptable status to a researcher.

Fifth, many gay familymen, fearing rejection, may be expected to conceal their orientation from wives, co-workers, children, friends, or employers. Consequently, even when a gay familyman is located, it is difficult and risky to arrange for a clandestine interview. Efforts to find and to interview a representative sample of gay familymen would be expected to meet with problems. Hoffman (1968: 21) apologizes for his small sample size of one gay familyman: "...married men who engage in homosexual practices are difficult to get for the purposes of interviewing."

The fact that persons in a particular social category -- say Jews, Chicanos, homosexuals, or gay fathers -- comprise only a tiny proportion of the general population and are not easily found does not mean that they cannot be studied. The problem calls for adaptive techniques. Many studies of theoretical interest have been carried out with nonrandom sampling methods -- for example, studies on juvenile gangs (Miller 1958), mental patients (Goffman 1961), street corner transients (Liebow 1967), and skidrow alcoholics (Wiseman

1970). Although it may be difficult to test precise hypotheses with nonrandom sampling, systematic availability samples provide a legitimate alternative worth pursuing:

> Although fully aware of the limitations of nonrandom sampling, sooner or later the experienced social scientist will realize that some form of it is often the only alternative to abandoning the inquiry. In some instances, he may be required to seize whatever opportunity is available... Availability samples are quite legitimate, so long as the inferences drawn from them are accompanied by reservations which are made necessary by the ill-defined relation between universe and sample (Mueller, Schuessler, and Costner 1970: 350).

It is not intended from the present data to generalize about the population of gay familymen. Rather, the data are used theoretically to indicate stages experienced in achieving identity component congruence. Considering the purpose of the study, the most appropriate sampling technique was deemed to be multiple-source, chain-referral sampling (Biernacki and Waldorf 1979) or "snowballing."

Utility of Chain-Referral Samples

Chain-referral samples have been employed with benefit by several researchers: Lindesmith 1947; Atkyns and Hanneman 1974; Scharse 1966; Becker 1966. Ponse (1978: 18), in particular, recommends the technique for researching homosexuals: "The pattern of contacts into the covert gay community was that of snowballing...which branched into contacts with others."

Chain-referral sampling does not proceed automatically.

Chains must be monitored with regard to the quality of data they provide. Control over the number of respondents in each chain, and the pace with which it is begun and extended must be regulated. At times the pace requires stimulation and at times it must be slowed or stopped. Ongoing analysis of the data governs decisions on shaping the referral process.

Specific problem areas include:

a) The initial location of respondents with whom referral chains might be started.

b) Engaging respondents to become _de facto_ research assistants to help locate other prospective respondents who meet research criteria.

c) Exercising control over both the types and size of referral chains.

d) Initiating new referral chains.

e) Monitoring the development of and information provided through the referral chains, pacing the developmental progress and speed of the chains.

f) Terminating referral chains prior to their being naturally exhausted (Biernacki and Waldorf 1979).

How these considerations were managed in the present research is discussed in the following section.

PROCEDURES EMPLOYED IN LOCATING RESPONDENTS

The search for gay familymen that fit the operational definition (see Chapter Three) involved several kinds of simultaneous chain referrals. Initially, word-of-mouth requests among local gay people yielded names of potential respondents. Although this was an obvious way to begin, it was not particularly successful. Typically, the suggested respondents were too few and too geographically dispersed to make interviewing them feasible. For example, the first three contacts proposed lived in Montreal, Fargo, N.D., and Louis Creek, B.C. It became clear that, in order to build a large sample, we needed to extend interviewing locales outside Edmonton and beyond Alberta, into the United States. It also became clear that, in order to mount this unfunded research, interviewing locales would have to be limited to accessible areas, each of which would have to contain a pool of prospective respondents.

Several reporters became interested in the research and offered newspaper accounts of the project. The tag line to the item was often an appeal to interested respondents.

News items were carried in the following newspapers: the Ottawa Citizen, the Toronto Star, the Windsor Star, the San Francisco Sentinel, the San Francisco Chronicle, the Los Angeles Times, the San Diego Update, the Boston Globe, The Advocate (San Mateo), The Body Politic (Toronto), The Quad-City Times (Iowa and Illinois). Editors of several newsletters also offered reports on the research: University of Sheffield (England) "Biomedical Information Service Report," "Sexuality Today," "National Gay Task Force Paper," Sociologists' Gay Caucus "Newsletter," American Library Association "Report," California "Newsletter on Sexuality," Canadian "Newsletter on Sex Roles Research."

We also contacted potential respondents through papers which we presented at fourteen academic, professional meetings (e.g., ASA, APA, PSA, CSAA, CPA -- see References). Some prospective respondents were contacted as a result of lectures at California State University (Fullerton, Northridge, and Los Angeles), Los Angeles City College, the Claremont Colleges, Occidental College, State University of New York at Purchase, and New York University.

Prospective respondents were also sought through talks to the following gay organizations[1]: Gay Academic Unions (Los Angeles, San Diego, and Chicago chapters), Edmonton Lesbian and Gay Rights Organization, Integrity (gay Episcopalians of Los Angeles), Edmonton Gay Alliance Towards Equality, Committee for Sexual Civil Liberties (Columbus, Ohio meetings), Whitman-Brooks Foundation (Los Angeles), ONE, Inc. (Los Angeles), National Gay Archives (Los Angeles), Mariposa Foundation (New York, San Diego).

The various sources complemented each other in providing different types of respondents. For example, potential respondents contacted by mail or phone from news publicity or in person at lectures tended to be covertly gay, while those contacted through the gay organizations tended to be openly gay. Although difficult to employ, the method served to diversify the sample.

Besides employing the help of local gays, media and organizational channels to make contacts, we enlisted the help of friends across the continent. We contacted them by phone and by letter, explained our research, and asked them to put us in touch with as many gay familymen as possible. When the replies came in, we assessed whether or not we could visit a particular city to do depth interviews: Did we have enough prospects demographically diverse or had we already interviewed enough men of similar backgrounds?

Using chain referrals, we visited Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, London (Ont.), Toronto, Ottawa, Boston, New York, Washington, Columbus, Chicago, Phoenix, San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. We thereby obtained a diversified cross-national sample from a variety of gay communities, climates, and city sizes.

Informal Versus Formal Interviews

Media, organizational, and friendship chain-referral experiences elicited the names, address, and telephone numbers of 141 gay familymen. Attempts were made to contact all of them. Only about 10 per cent failed to respond either to letter or to telephone call. The response rate is higher than for most studies of gays (see Harry and DeVall 1978: 25). Most respondents in chain referrals are predisposed to cooperate. (In fact, many were grateful that we listened to their histories.

One said, "Telling my story might help me put my life together.") We conducted short interviews (up to one-half hour) with 73 of these men. We interviewed 54 men in sessions that averaged three hours. Each of the two sets of interviews is described below.

Gay familymen with whom we carried out short interviews differ from others in three ways: First, the men who were interviewed more briefly were to a large extent upper-middle class and largely professional. Since it was decided that it would not do to have a sample that over-represented this group, few among the longer interviewed set were of this ilk. (The fact that we met so many people with these characteristics does not mean that they are disproportionately represented in the total gay familyman population but is more likely a factor of the chain-referral methodology.)

Second, many of the people interviewed in brief we met at speeches, parties, bars, and conferences where facilities for formal interviews were unavailable, where people were unprepared for the chance contacts and were unable to give an immediate interview. For several reasons, primarily covertness, interviews could not be arranged for a later time.

Third, many of the brief contacts were made by mail or telephone (largely in response to newspaper publicity), and we were unable to meet them in person due to geographical distance.

We encouraged prospective respondents to the shorter form to write letters about their experiences to supplement our half-hour conversations. We received about 24 letters with details of their lives.[2] We did not tabulate material from the short interviews or letters, and it is not combined with data from the lengthier interviews.

The same is true for ancillary data subsequently collected. For example, during the past two years, we have conducted a private psychotherapy practice where nine of the patients have been gay familymen. We thus became acquainted with some clinical features of this population. We also contacted and interviewed 17 wives and 14 children of gay familymen, as well as many gay fathers' lovers. This provided data on various family members' perceptions of the gay familyman. It corroborated statements made by the focus population and also allowed the researcher to see the families as whole, interdependent systems. As stated, however, these materials are not used in the analysis to follow.

LIFE HISTORY DEPTH INTERVIEWING

> We hope that a fuller understanding of the complexity of the scientific enterprise will restore sociologists' sense of the versatility and worth of the life history.
> --Howard S. Becker (1966: xviii)
> Introduction to Shaw's The Jack-Roller

Life history depth interviews, not questionnaires, were conducted with the gay familymen respondents.

Questionnaires were not possible since there was no previous research to indicate what questions might be the important ones to ask. Denzin (1978) says, unless one is researching an area which is already quite familiar to social science, one cannot have a great deal of confidence that one is, in fact, asking appropriate questions. Moreover, factual data collected by fixed response questionnaires are of little relevance in attempting to determine the subjective aspects of gay familymen's identities and the identity career paths whereby they develop identity component congruence.

In addition to the limitations of questionnaires in assessing subjective factors and situational contingencies, it is apparent that questionnaire items which initially seem appropriate and innocuous may in fact "lead the witness" and be prejudicial in ways which are at odds with respondents' worldviews. For example, Weinberg (1977) asked his gay respondents about their "sex with a man." His respondents were upset by this question since they thought he should have asked about "sex with other men." His respondents angrily told him that the former question implied that they were not men themselves. Bell and Weinberg (1978) were similarly chastised by respondents for the crudeness of their questionnaire items. They asked respondents if they had told their parents they are gay. Many respondents said they had told their parents, but this telling was irrelevant since the parents blocked the knowledge, did not believe them, or gave no acknowledgement that the information registered with them. Respondents said, if you want to know what percentage of gays are "out" to their parents, a much more sensitive question needs to be asked.

The point of these examples is that structured questionnaire items in virgin areas may not only alienate potential respondents but fail to obtain the desired information, giving misleading data instead. Depth interviews lessen this possibility and allow respondents to present information they consider important within their world view.[4]

Interview Schedule

The interview was semi-structured. To compose the interview schedule, we modified Lemert's (1951: 445-446) suggestions for conducting depth interviews with "deviants" and Kinsey's (1948: 63-70) suggestions for taking sexual life histories. Theoretical issues guided specific probes. For example, respondents were not asked directly about formation of their identity. People not familiar with sociological terms cannot be expected to understand questions that deal directly with the development of component congruency in identity formation. Instead, interviews had "orienting questions" (Denzin 1978: 214-255) that encouraged gay familymen to tell their own life story in their own time, and in their own words with the focus of attention directed toward those aspects of their lives relevant to their sexual, marital, parental, social identities and their feelings about them. Respondents were asked about how they came to see themselves as gay, how they viewed their homosexuality and the familyman status at various times in their lives, how they perceived others saw them at various points in their lives. This semi-structured procedure allowed closer approximation of the version of reality constructed by the respondents themselves. (See Interview Schedule in Appendix.)

Sample Size

The target group for the formal interview and analysis comprises 54 gay familymen. Only 50 of this group were included in the final sample. Four were excluded for the following reasons: One interview was cut short by a family emergency and we were unable to resume it at a later date. Correlative data on two respondents cast doubt on their veracity, so they were excluded. One of these two was also evasive throughout the interview and refused to answer about 25 per cent of the questions. The fourth person was excluded since he called in a panic a day after his interview and said he decided he was "not really gay" after all, adding, "Sometimes I just slip." He asked to be removed from the study and to have his tape destroyed. We were left with a depth interview sample size of 50.

Although the present sample size would be inadequate for some kinds of research, such as large-scale social surveys, the sample size compares favorably with other indepth interview research. (See Tables 2 and 3).

Since we were interested in the quality of the men's experiences, we decided that it made more sense to concentrate efforts on an indepth examination of a small sample rather than to do a superficial survey of a larger one -- if it could be found. According to Lofland (1971: 91):

> The management problem [of material gathered in this kind of study] is such that studies utilizing qualitative interviewing tend to employ rather few interviews. It is my impression that studies based on intensive interviewing have typically used only from about 20 to 50 interviews. Given the material management problem, numbers in that range seem quite reasonable.

The material management point is well taken. In this study, for example, there are over 150 hours of tape recordings. Full transcription of an average three hour interview takes from forty to fifty hours, a process which eventually necessitated transcribing only the relevant portions of the tapes. This was difficult even with the hand-mapping procedure since, as we said before, respondents skipped back and forth in time and in topic in recounting their histories.

Besides practical issues of sample size, Glaser and Strauss (1967) say sample size may be limited for theoretical reasons. They say once depth interviews exceed 25 respondents, the researcher gains little new information

Table 2

INTERVIEW SAMPLE SIZES IN SELECTED STUDIES OF SEXUAL MINORITIES

	Respondents	Researchers	Interview Sample Size	
			Short	Depth
1.	Homosexuals			
	a) General Studies:	Hooker (1957)		30
		Dank (1971)	182	55
	b) Canadian Studies	Leznoff, Westley (1956)	60	40
		Barber (1972)		20
		Sawchuck (1974)		12
	c) Lesbians	Simon, Gagnon (1967a,b)		11
		McCaghy, Skipper (1969)		35
		Hedblom (1972)	57	
		Cronin (1974)		65
		Ponse (1976)		75
	d) Impersonal Sex	Humphreys (1975)	50	12
		Troiden (1974)	50	
	e) Gay Husbands	Ross (1971, 1972)		10
		Ross (1979)		42
		Latham, White (1978)		5
	f) Lesbian Mothers	Pagelow (1980)		20
		Lewin (1981)		41
2.	Transvestites	Buckner (1971)		7
3.	Transsexuals	Kando (1973)		17
4.	Strippers	Skipper, McCaghy (1970)		35
5.	Abortionees	Henslin (1971)		22
6.	Swingers:			
	a) General Studies	Bell, Silva (1971)		25
		Varni (1972)		16
		Palson, Palson (1974	136	
	b) Swinging Wives	Symonds (1971)		10
		Henshel (1973)		25
7.	Bisexuals	Blumstein,Schwartz (1977)	150	
8.	Prostitutes			
	a) Female	Bryan (1965)		33
		Davis (1971)		30
	b) Male	Ross (1959)		7
9.	Nudists	Weinberg (1976)	101	

Table 3

DEPTH INTERVIEW SAMPLE SIZES IN SELECTED STUDIES OF STIGMATIZED PERSONS

	Respondents	Authors	Sample Sizes
1.	Sex:		
	a) Wives of Gays	Hatterer (1974)	17
	b) Gays' Female Friends	Warren (1976)	15
	c) Transsexuals' Boyfriends	Money, Brennan (1970)	7
2.	Suicide:		
	a) Suicide Victims' Families	Henslin (1970)	25
	b) Wives of Suicide Victims	Wallace (1973)	12
3.	Voluntarily Childless Wives	Veevers (1973)	32
4.	Ex-narcotic Addicts	Bullington _et_ _al_. (1969)	31
5.	Pseudo Mental Patients	Rosenhan (1973)	8
6.	Embezzlers	Nettler (1974)	6
7.	Pool Hustlers	Polsky (1970)	6
8.	Spouse Murderers	Chimbos (1976)	34

of theoretical significance. They call this point "saturation." Additional respondents, they claim, simply relate variations on the themes that the research has already clarified. For these reasons, a sample size of 50 depth interviews is considered adequate to meet the goals of this research.

Setting Up Interviews

All the depth interview respondents were contacted prior to the interview, usually by telephone, and an appointment time established. This initial contact served other purposes as well. It helped us complete a preinterview schedule (see Appendix) containing basic demographics of respondents. It also allowed us to introduce them to the study. Respondents were told that the research is on gay familymen, their history and how they live their lives. Additionally, they were told that the interview would be audio recorded, would last about three hours, and that it would be private and confidential, so no one else should be in the room at the time. Information was kept at a minimum, and questions (e.g., "What have you discovered about us so far?") were delayed until after the interview.

Finding a mutually convenient time and place for interviewing posed a problem. Interviews were done largely during summer vacations, so we had only a few days in most cities. Also, since some respondents were fearfully closeted, interviews had a catch-as-catch-can quality, and it was necessary to negotiate time and place. One interview, for example, was conducted at 7 a.m. in a hotel room and another was conducted at 10 p.m. in a coffee shop, although the majority of interviews took place in respondents' homes.

Making observations in situ has several advantages. Since respondents are on their own territory, ease in discussing their private lives is increased. Additionally, respondents have the opportunity to present to the interviewer "back-stage" details that further illustrate their lives: family photo albums, mementoes, hobbies and pets. It also allows the researcher to make an assessment of the ambience of respondents' homes, neighborhood environment, personal amenities, magazines, and details that would otherwise be lost to the researcher. For example, one man showed us his collection of sex toys, another his books, and another his art. Webb (1970) calls this method "triangulation of physical traces" and recommends it for checking internal validity.

Confidentiality

In initial telephone contacts with respondents, as noted previously, we were careful to guarantee the men both anonymity and confidentiality. (In a chain referral sample it is especially important to assure respondents that nothing they reveal will get back to the mutual acquaintance in the referral chain.)

Respondents were told direct quotations from them might be used in the dissertation and subsequent publications, but no names would be connected to them. One respondent, a member of the New York Social Register, was especially concerned with secrecy. When we arrived to do the interview he had prepared a form for us to sign swearing anonymity and confidentiality. After we signed it, he was relaxed and candid throughout the interview. Subsequent to this experience, we prefaced interviews with several additional sentences on confidentiality and anonymity so as to reassure respondents about our fiduciary relationship. (See, also, Gelles 1976).

The issue of confidentiality cannot be dismissed cavalierly. Since gay familymen engage in not only stigmatized behavior but sometimes illegal behavior -- homosexual acts violate sodomy laws in over half the American states -- respondents are understandably reluctant to admit such acts on tape. With this in mind, we changed not only all respondents' names in quotations, but also place-names such as stores, streets, and small communities where identification might be possible.

No one has had access to the audio-recorded interviews or field notes. Tapes and notes are kept in a locked filing cabinet and they are identified by code number only. There is no master list. Since only fifty respondents are involved, and since we came to know them well over a number of years through depth interviews, it was relatively easy to commit identifying details to memory and to sort out characteristics of one respondent from another by familiarity. It is understood that the precautions taken adhere to the guidelines for the protection of human subjects in research at the University of Alberta.

Interviewing Techniques

To start the interviews, we usually had a house tour, then asked routine and emotionally-neutral questions about respondents' daily rounds: nature of their domestic tastes and satisfactions with their neighborhoods. After a brief period, we reiterated the purpose of the interview, said it would chart their life history and that it would "begin at the beginning by asking about brothers/sisters/parents and their occupations." Starting out with demographics on their family of origin, helped respondents relax by easing into the interview gradually and by deflecting attention away from their present sexual concerns, focusing instead on others and their environments.

By this time, the tape recorder was running and the interview was well underway. The audio recorder was small with an unobtrusive condenser microphone. No one objected to the recorder; in fact, respondents did not even seem aware of it during the interview. (For a discussion of the tape recorder in research, see Gordon 1969.)

Once respondents began relating the narratives of their families, they became caught up in the story-telling and lost whatever reticence they may have had initially. Interviews averaged a length of about three hours, with a minimum of two and one-half hours and a maximum of eight hours (completed in two sessions). Respondents were willing to go beyond the confines of the usual interview situation and to reveal almost any aspect of their life in which interest was expressed. The men talked openly about their experiences, even on aspects of life which would ordinarily fall within the private sphere. Most seem to have anticipated that such would be the case and implicitly consented to such discussions when they agreed to be interviewed. There are, however, exceptions to this which will be discussed in the next section on "Difficulties in Conducting the Research."

In most cases, interaction with respondents did not end with termination of the formal depth interview. The three hour interviews were generally followed by a host-guest relationship lasting for another several hours, during which time we were joined by the children, wife, or lover, although this situation was more common with overtly gay respondents than with covertly gay ones. Often we were invited to stay for a meal and, if time permitted, we accepted. Several respondents gave us personally conducted tours of their cities, particularly their gay communities, and introduced us to friends. This post-interview contact was almost as informative as the interviews themselves. Respondents' interactions with significant others and peers was noted in their residences, at parties, hustlers' cruising spots, gay baths, gay bars, and at a gay church.

All but one of the respondents expressed willingness to be interviewed again -- either in the near future or in several years -- one indication that the interview was a positive experience for them. Several asked if we would keep the tapes and thought it would be interesting if, in the future, they could listen to what they said years before.

Notes of appreciation were mailed to all respondents. These were mailed directly to overt respondents and through intermediaries to covert ones. Respondents were also supplied with copies of research results. This served several purposes: First, it helped ease the guilt the researcher experienced in taking so much from the respondents; it helped us complete the research bargain. Second, it helped us maintain contact with about two-thirds of the respondents and to receive follow-up data on their lives. Third, it helped us obtain feedback on the research findings, respondents suggesting improvements and clarifications that needed to be added. (For difficulties involved in such extended contact, see Miller and Humphreys, 1980, and parts of the next section.)

Difficulties in Conducting the Research

Despite confidentiality warnings, non-threatening interview techniques, follow-up contact, and much previous interview experience, a number of problems arose in implementing the research. Several examples are cited: One man was especially reluctant to talk with us. "There's nothing about me you'd be interested in," he said during our initial telephone conversation. "Surely there are others who can tell you more than me. I'm not so good a talker." After a few minutes, he said, "Well, you can come by if you want, but you're probably wasting your time." We made an appointment. When we arrived at his house he had "forgotten" we were coming and was in the midst of cleaning out his garage. His wife came out on the back porch to see who we were. He told her we had come to purchase some of their cast-offs. We thought it was a weak excuse, especially since we were carrying a tape recorder and clip board. Nevertheless, his wife seemed to buy the story.

To do the interview, the gay familymen and the researcher sat in his car. Crates, old furniture and tools were piled in the driveway around it. The man seemed jittery and was anxious to know when we were going to leave. However, once we engaged him in conversation about himself, he became interested in the topic. He talked for two and three-quarters hours. He told us of his struggle with his sexuality, his marital crises and his fears about the future. At points he angrily pounded the steering wheel, discussing "lost love." By the end of the interview, he thanked us and apologized for taking up our time. He said talking to us had "cleared the air" for him.

A stranger who wants an interview in which to ask personal questions can be threatening; consequently, potential respondents can make the initial part of interviewing difficult. Questions can raise emotional material that upsets individuals' senses that their lives, however troubled, are at least under control. To have questions asked about the assumptions on which one bases one's life can be threatening. They may be instrumental in the person losing control. Indeed, once some respondents began talking, years of carefully repressed emotions came tumbling out, secrets that they had told no one. Sixty-four per cent (N=32) of respondents cried at least once during the interview.

The research brought us in contact with people who felt depressed, trapped, and wanted a neutral listener. We found it physically impossible to do more than two interviews per day. A part of this exhaustion was an awareness of the ethical and intellectual responsibilities of dealing fairly and objectively with respondents who were often emotionally fragile.

Such a drain on energies was compounded by follow-up contact, especially with covertly gay respondents. Subsequent to interviews, some called to talk about coming out to wives and children, their reactions, divorces, suicidal feelings, and custody battles. When there is no continuing contact, no letters or phone calls subsequent to the interviews, sociologists probably remain blissfully ignorant of the results of their obtrusive research methods. It is serious enough to be instrumental in the opening of old wounds and the disclosure of buried motivations, but the pain from those wounds continues to drain into letters and midnight phone calls. The valuable knowledge gained from research includes relationships that can be painful to a concerned researcher.

Other difficulties in conducting the research concern outright refusals to complete forms and answer particular questions. For example, one man refused to complete the Kinsey Sexual Orientation Scales. He did not want to discuss his fantasy life, and he was ideologically opposed to sociologists "pigeon-holing people" on such a chart. Another was ideologically opposed to talking about his former wife's feelings and reactions to his homosexuality: "As a male, I cannot presume to speak for any woman, much less my ex-wife." Although these respondents refused to comply with these research requests, they were surprisingly uninhibited in complying with other material requested. Both talked freely about adulterous homosexual affairs during marriage, about how they hoodwinked significant others, and other seemingly discreditable behaviors. It is interesting to note that the definition of what constitutes private experiences of too personal a nature for free discussion varies markedly from one respondent to another.

More than others, two questions in particular tended to elicit squirming, embarassment, halting responses, and in one case outright refusals. The answer to these two questions was often the same for both, possibly explaining why they elicited similar emotional reactions. The two questions were: "How did your wife discover your homosexuality?" and "Tell me about your tearoom experiences." A common answer was, "My wife discovered my homosexuality when I was arrested in a tearoom." Respondents recalled this as one of the most painful times of their lives and did not enjoy dredging their memories to relate detail of the experiences.

ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA

We have found no work that provides instruction on analyzing qualitative, life-history interview data. Becker (1960) states that analyzing qualitative data is the most "creative" aspect of the sociological enterprise, but he does not outline its steps. C. W. Mills (1958) states that it is problematic to reconstruct the cognitive processes involved in this exercise of the sociological imagination.

Techniques exist for the analysis of participant-observation data (Glaser and Strauss 1964; McCall and Simmons 1969; Becker and Geer 1960), but these are of limited help in analyzing life-history interview data. Several studies have employed life-history interview data

(Cavan 1928; Thomas and Znaniecki 1918-20; Garfinkel 1967), but none of them sets forth the methods used to analyze their data.

Merton states (1957: 390):

> This part of our report, then, is a bid to the sociological fraternity for the practice of incorporating in publications a detailed account of the ways in which qualitative analyses actually developed. Only when a considerable body of such reports are available will it be possible to codify methods of qualitative analysis with something of the clarity with which quantitative methods have been articulated.

To date, however, nothing appears to have been done about his request, as is witnessed by the similar pleas of Barton and Lazarsfeld (1961) and Schwartz and Jacobs (1979).

Lofland (1971) bemoans the deficiency, but offers only two pages on the problem and few suggestions as to how one might analyze life-history interview data. He calls the method "phase analysis:" "an analysis where a search is made for stages of movement in a particular social category" (p. 39).

Although we have not been able to locate any written accounts of "phase analysis," it is clear that many researchers have used the technique without identifying it as such: Becker (1953) finds three stages in the making of a marijuana user. Davis (1968) finds six stages in the development of a professional nurse. Lofland and Stark (1965) find seven stages that evoke a millenarian cultist. Cressey (1971) finds three stages in the creation of an embezzler. Veevers (1980) finds two ways with three stages each in the development of a voluntarily childless couple. Since we are looking for stages experienced in the acquisition of identity component congruence, this format should be similarly appropriate.

None of the above cited authors, however, reveals the method whereby he/she has analyzed data to come up with the stages reported. Davis comes closest when he writes: "[I searched for] those feelings, states, inner turning points, and experiential markings which, from the perspective of the subjects, imparted a characteristic tone, meaning, and quality to the way they saw themselves over time" (1968: 237). Possibly it is the largely subjective nature of such analysis that makes methodological specification problematic.

Qualitative Analysis in the Present Study

Data in the present study are subject to "phase analysis" (Lofland 1971: 39). By employing this method, the dissertation attempts to remedy some of the imprecision of past research that has apparently used the same method. From the respondents' interviews, identity statements were extracted and arranged in a time sequence. These working records were then examined for uniformities of behavior and regularities in changes concerning identity over time. We searched the data for a set of stages that are relatively common to the respondents in achieving identity component congruence. In the event that respondents display multiple sets of stages and sub-stages, the analysis takes the form of presenting the various patterns of phases found among the respondents.

A central question asked of the data concerns the meanings that the respondents have given the process through which they have passed. The stages searched for are member-identified stages, phases that respondents have already designated. Since the data are composed of life-history interviews - and since respondents did not answer direct questions, asked in uniform ways in a specific format - responses are not as easily quantifiable as in questionnaire data. This means that precise weightings regarding the relative importance of each stage are not possible and that there is an unavoidably subjective component to the analysis.

In the process of analyzing the data, we were guided by the questions raised by the SSR conceptual framework. Specifically, we followed the questions as suggested in the three part SSR matrix. In seeking to answer its first question (see Chapter Two), we looked at places in the data where respondents talked about their earliest perceptions of their sexuality, what words they used to describe it, their earliest sexual behavior, when they found out the meaning of the term "homosexual," how they drew conclusions relating themselves to their understanding of that term, whether they tried to avoid the term, and their feelings surrounding these events.

Concerning the second question in the matrix (also in

Chapter Two), the data were searched for statements on how the respondents presented themselves sexually to others at various times in their lives, how they tried to come across to different groups, what behaviors and feelings were associated with these events.

In regard to the third question, detailed in Chapter Two, data examination was guided by the following queries: How do respondents think significant others perceived the respondent's sexuality? How did others make this known to respondents? What are the respondents' feelings about the situation? Did respondents make any attempts to try to change the situation? Where there any changes over time? What experiences were contingent upon these situations?

Upon summarizing these experiences, the research notes were examined for emerging trends as to the respondent-identified stages experienced in achieving identity congruence. The data are used to answer not only the three SSR questions and show the stages whereby identity congruence is achieved, but to answer general questions about the model's stages for enrichment of the SSR paradigm.

Limitations of the Analysis

Certain qualifications must be made about the analysis and the resulting conclusions. Finding that gay familymen display certain series of stages in identity formation, it is problematic to conclude that these stages are applicable to all groups seeking identity congruence. Nor is it certain that others studying different populations of gay familymen would find identical series of stages. For example, Hall (1948-49) found four stages, while Becker et al. (1961) found three stages in the ways similar populations became medical doctors. Cressey (1971) and Nettler (1974) come to different conclusions on the stages experienced in becoming an embezzler.

The study, however, provides direction and offers tentative stages so that the SSR model may be retested by others using different research populations. Only by such replication can the external validity of the proposed research be determined.

In summary, there are few methodological guidelines for analyzing qualitative, life-history interview data; and there is little empirical defense for this mode of analysis. Gans, however, suggests a qualitative defense:

> The findings (of qualitative research) have all the faults of the methods by which they were reached. Often, the resulting generalizations are examples of what Merton calls "post factum sociological interpretation;" they have been developed after the observations were made and are not tests of prior hypotheses. This, then, is not a scientific study, for it does not provide what Merton has called compelling evidence for a series of hypotheses. It is, rather, an attempt by a trained social scientist to describe and explain the behavior of a large number of people, using his methodological and theoretical training to sift the observations, and to report only those generalizations which are justified by the data. The validity of my findings thus rests ultimately on my judgments about the data, and of course on my theoretical and personal biases in deciding what to study,

> what to see, what to ignore and how to analyze the products. Properly speaking, the study is a reconnaissance, an exploration of a community to provide an overview, guided by the canons of sociological theory and method, but not attempting to offer documentation for all the findings. I do not mean to cast doubt on the conclusions I reached (I stand behind them all) or on the methods I used. Interviewing-observation is the only method I know that enables the researcher to get close to the realities of social life. Its deficiencies in producing quantitative data are more than made up by its ability to minimize the distance betwen the researcher and his subject of study (1967: 49).

Many of Gans' considerations seem applicable to the research outlined in this proposal.

Limitations of the Data

In spite of the general suitability of the data for the task, some limitations are present. Five cautions are cited. First, the data are not gathered to test hypotheses *per se*. The study, however, may generate hypotheses for future testing. Second, the research is *exploratory*, not definitive in its analysis of patterns for achieving identity component congruence among gay familymen.

Third, since respondents are from chain referral samples, not randomly selected, no claims of representativeness can be made. The universe of gay familyment is unknown and, to date, unknowable.

A fourth limitation of the data is that it comes from life histories. Much of this information is recollected data and subject to various kinds of distortion to an unknowable degree. Fifth, the data do not document the actualities of respondents' identity formation but rather their perceptions of their feelings, self presentations, and others' reactions. Identity components in the model, however, recognize the central importance of respondents' perceptions in identity formation. The present research design has attempted to minimize the impact of these five limitations, and it is believe they do not unduly restrict the worth of this research.

Presentation of the Data

Representative quotations are presented to illustrate the various kinds of perceptions found in the larger body of data for each issue. Although there are twenty-one respondents who capture the majority of the quotations, each respondent is quoted at least once. These twenty-one respondents are selected in terms of their clarity of expression, representativeness, and articulation. On occasion, when there are only a few respondents in a given category or when each of the quotations illustrate a slightly different but important insight, all of the quotations in a given category are presented. Quotations are edited to eliminate such sounds as "um," "ah," "oh," redundancy, pauses, and other speech ticks. These are both difficult to translate into print and distract readers from substantive content.

When quotations are presented to illustrate particular points, readers may assume that conclusions are drawn only from these particular quotations. It should be kept in mind, however, that these quotations are used only as representative of the larger body of data. Even though other respondents may make similar comments, space does not allow all respondents to be quoted on all issues.

It is also possible that another researcher with access to the same body of data, including contextual detail seldom presented in this dissertation, might code and categorize them differently and thus draw different conclusions about the processes described. This is an especially crucial issue. Therefore, we have preserved the original audio recordings of the interviews. It is our intention to make available full transcripts of the interviews. All identifying tags will be removed and the transcripts made available for replication, secondary analysis, and other research purposes.

This step is important for another reason. Much of the data collected is tangential to the present study and has not been coded, analyzed or presented. This is particularly the case with early childhood data and with the ancillary data from wives, children, lovers, and significant others. These data could form the basis of numerous other studies and it is important that researchers have access to it.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Because respondents are from chain referrals and are selected in a purposive manner -- and because the major focus of concern is upon stages of developing identity component congruence rather than upon presenting objective descriptions generalizable to all gay familymen, there is little utility in a statistical analysis of the depth interviews. Nevertheless, it is useful to know the kinds of persons who are interviewed and to be able to make at least tentative comparisons between their demographic characteristics and those of the general population.

Respondents Compared to American Fathers, 1977

Every year at the University of Chicago, the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) conducts a survey of opinions and attitudes held by a representative sample of all persons in the United States over the age of eighteen. (Details of the sampling technique and of the specific instruments used are available by contacting NORC.) Data from this survey provide a suitable reference population for comparison with the group of gay familyment respondents. To maximize comparability, the total NORC sample in 1977 (N=1,530) was restricted to only those persons most like the gay familyman respondents -- namely those who are white,[5] male, aged twenty-five to forty-nine, married at least once, with at least one child. (The year 1977 was selected since that is the year most of the respondents were interviewed.) The result is a

Table 4

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF GAY FAMILYMEN COMPARED TO FATHERS: US 1977[1]

Characteristic	Per Cent Gay Familymen N=50	Per Cent Reference Population of Fathers, N=185
AGE		
Under 25	2	--
25-29	4	15
30-34	14	21
35-39	22	19
40-44	12	24
45-49	20	22
Over 50	26	--
Mean Age	44	38
Age Range	24-64	25-49
RELIGION RAISED IN		
Protestant	44	63
Catholic	42	29
Jewish	10	3
None	2	4
Other	2	1
EDUCATION		
Less than High School Grad.	--	27
High School Graduate	20	39
Some College	8	13
Undergraduate Degree	24	12
Some Post Graduate Training	10	3
Post Graduate Degree	38	7

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[1] NORC data on a representative cross-section (N=1,530) of total population of the continental United States: sub-samples of white persons, aged 25-49 who are currently married, are living with their spouse, and have at least one child. Due to rounding, percentages do not always total exactly 100 per cent.

Table 4, Continued

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF GAY FAMILYMEN COMPARED TO FATHERS: US 1977[1]

Charactertistics	Per Cent Gay Familymen N=50	Per Cent Reference Population of Fathers, N=185
MARITAL HISTORY AT FIRST INTERVIEW		
Married	48	81
Previously Divorced/Separated/ Widowed	52	19
SOCIAL CLASS		
Lower	--	2
Working-$12T/yr;high school or less	22	50
Lower-middle-$12-20T/yr; some college	22	
Upper-middle-$20-50T/yr; college grad +	34	45
Upper-$50T+/yr;advanced prof. degree	22	3
EMPLOYMENT STATUS		
Working (full-time)	82	89
Working (part-time)	14	2
Retired/Unemployed	4	--
In School	--	2
Other	--	7

---

[1] NORC data on a representative cross-section (N=1,503) of total population of the continental United States: sub-samples of white persons, aged 25-49 who are currently married, are living with their spouse, and have at least one child. Due to rounding, percentages do not always total exactly 100 per cent.

Table 4, Continued

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF GAY FAMILYMEN: OCCUPATION AND NATIONALITY

Characteristics	Per Cent Gay Familymen N=50
OCCUPATION[1]	
Professional (Professors, Lawyers, etc.)	40
Semi-Professional (Teachers, helping professions, etc.)	20
Managerial/Entrepreneur	
(Large)	6
(Small)	6
Clerical	10
Blue Collar (Skilled/semi-skilled/unskilled)	14
Farming	--
Student	--
Unemployed/Retired	4
NATIONALITY	
Canadian	20
American	80

---

[1] Classified According to Pineo and Porter (1974).

randomly selected reference population (N=185) which is used for the purposes of comparison with the group of gay familymen respondents (N=50), as shown in Table 4.

Age. Respondents range in age from 24 to 64; however, the mean age is 44 years. This is six years older than the mean for the reference population of fathers.

Religion raised in. There is a range of religious affiliation represented, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish. The "None" category includes 2 per cent (N=1) agnostics, while the "Other" category includes 2 per cent (N=1) Mormons (see Affirmation 1980). Roman Catholics and Jews are somewhat over represented in the sample.

Education. Although the range of education is from high school to the post-doctoral level, most respondents (72 per cent) have at least one university degree. There is an over presentation of highly educated people in the sample. This is partly a result of the chain referral methodology and the fact that highly educated people are more sympathetic toward and cooperative with scholarly research. Also, at the risk of sounding elitist, highly educated people tend to be more articulate and easier to interview.

Marital history at first interview. Forty-eight per cent of the respondents were married at the time of the first interview and 52 per cent were previously divorced, separated or widowed. Compared with the reference population of fathers, respondents in this study are disproportionately divorced, separated, or widowed. Gay familymen living with wives tend to be more covert about their homosexuality and more difficult to locate for interviews than gay familymen who are divorced, separated or widowed.

Social class. Combining income with education to measure social class, respondents are disproportionately middle class compared to the reference population of fathers. (See Chapter Ten for discussion on the effect of this bias). Working and upper class each constitute 22 per cent of the sample while combining the lower-middle and upper-middle classes gives a total of 56 per cent middle class respondents. Gay familymen also tended to describe themselves as "middle-class."

Employment status. Respondents are remarkably uniform in their employment status. Eight-two per cent work full-time and 14 per cent work part-time. One respondent is retired and one is unemployed. None are full-time students. This sample of gay familymen most closely approximates the reference population of fathers on the demographic of employment status.

Occupation. A wide range of occupations is represented in the sample. In the blue-collar category, respondents had such jobs as heavy equipment operator, short-order cook, bartender, and oil pipeline mechanic, among others. Clerical jobs included such employment as bank teller, secretary, and sales clerk, among others. The managerial/entrepreneur category included such jobs as real estate executive, owner of beauty salons, owner of florist shops, and stockbroker, among others. Respondents in the teaching and helping professions held such occupations as parochial school teacher, clergyman, social work supervisor, and hospital aide, among others. In the category of professionals, there are university professors, physicians, and lawyers. Occupations are included which give workers the opportunity to be open about gayness (e.g., beauty salon owner), and occupations where there is minimal autonomy to be open about gayness (e.g., parochial school teacher). More will be said later in the dissertation about this factor's role in achieving identity component congruence.

Nationality. Eighty per cent of respondents are American, while 20 per cent are Canadian. Most parts of the both countries are represented with the exceptions of northern and eastern Canada and the southeastern United States. Referral chains in these parts of the continent did not produce enough of a concentration of potential respondents to make interviewing there feasible.

Summarizing, it is not possible to say how representative the present sample of gay familymen is of gay familymen in general since the universe of that population is, to date, unknowable. Certainly, the present sample is atypical from the reference population of fathers on a number of demographics. The sample is older with more disrupted marriages. It is also better educated and has a higher social class than the reference population of fathers. Future research may draw a more representative sample of gay familymen, although the present sample is the most diverse sample of such men collected to date.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has detailed the methodology of the present study. Data collection and analysis were described under the headings of rationale in selecting the gay familyman respondents, procedures used in locating respondents, processes involved in life-history depth interviewing, analyzing the data and limitations of the analysis, and finally the demographics of respondents.

Any research project involves a series of calculated compromises between the ideal design for the collection and examination of relevant data and the feasible design which is workable under the non-ideal conditions and limitations of time and money. The procedures outlined here do not provide conclusive information about the nature of achieving identity component congruence among gay familymen.[6] Starting with an area of investigation virtually untouched by family sociologists, however, they do provide a pool of qualitatively rich data for tentative suggestion of stages experienced. Even under the ideal conditions of a very large research grant and a large staff of research assistants, the responsible use of such resources would still necessitate an exploratory study such as the one outlined here as the first essential step.

NOTES

[1] Although it might seem like an obvious place to begin, we did not contact respondents through gay father organizations and no respondents at the time of the initial interview belonged to such groups (although some respondents have subsequently joined). We avoided such groups because we wanted to discover how gay familymen themselves construct their identities without formal group support, without being given a gay father organization "party line."

[2] In addition to these letters, we received six anonymous letters. Two came in business envelopes with the return addresses obliterated, and the others came with no return addresses at all. The gay familymen knew that we could not reply without their addresses, but it was apparently more important for them to get concerns "off their chests" than to risk discovery obtaining feedback. One letter that was postmarked from a small midwestern American city and told a particularly tragic story began, "Dear Anybody, Is someone listening, does anyone care?" Reading the letter, we had the impression we were reading a suicide note, although we will never know for certain.

[3] Data were also collected on never-married gay men who became fathers through non-traditional means (adoption, artificial insemination, etc.). Discussion of them, however, is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

[4] For discussion on additional advantages of the life history method, see Howard Becker's Introduction to Shaw's The Jack-Roller, 1966. For discussion of the repercussions of life-history research as a method of investigation, see Heyl 1979.

[5] Non-whites were excluded from the sample because of inter-racial interviewing difficulties and to control for the variable of race.

[6] When Berelson and Steiner attempted an inventory of the significant findings of the social sciences up to 1964, they suggested, somewhat facetiously, that every finding ought to be preceded with three important qualifications: "under certain circumstances," "other things

being equal," and "in our culture" (Berelson and Steiner 1964: 7). Although these qualifications are generally left implicit, they are clearly applicable to all social science in general and to the present research in particular, given the limitations of sampling and methodology.

CHAPTER FIVE

STAGE ONE: IDENTITY DISORIENTATION

> To be nobody-but-myself -- in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else -- means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight, and never stop fighting.
>
> --e. e. cummings
> in Norman's The Magic Maker

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses early developments in identity conflict resolution toward forming a gay familyman identity. Although respondents describe a variety of early experiences leading to this identity, central patterns emerge and it is the modal experiences that are described.

It is difficult to know at what point to begin discussing gay familymen's identity formation. The Strauss-Stone-Rainwater model indicates that identity formation is a life-long process, although it gives no information on how and when the process starts. The respondents interviewed for this study were unable to relate earliest (infancy to puberty) identity-forming experiences, partly because developing an identity is a complex process which includes the ability to symbolize, to think abstractly, to interpret events and attitudes, to impute motives, and so on (Cooley 1902; Thomas 1922; Mead 1934; Lindesmith and Strauss 1968). Consequently, whatever identity-forming events that occurred pre-pubertally with respondents were not readily observable or easily remembered by them.

From an interactionist stance, people do not instantly and obviously "know" they are homosexual. Hence, the most likely initial step in discussing the process of identity development rests with the first conscious understanding in which the person comes to see himself as a distinct individual. Regarding homosexuality, this occurs when the person perceives himself as possibly homosexual, shaping and interpreting sexual and social meanings surrounding the designation. People build up layers of meaning from their associations and interactions, modify and negotiate these meanings before they come to see themselves as potentially homosexual and adopt such an identity. For these reasons, discussion of identity development in this research begins at respondent's entrance to puberty.

In this chapter, as in subsequent chapters, the discussion is organized around the three identity matrix questions: 1) Who do I feel I am? 2) Who do I announce myself to be? 3) How do others perceive me?

WHO DO I FEEL I AM?

The first component in the SSR model concerns who the person feels he is. There are a number of elements in the social world that may become interpreted as sources for later homosexual identification. For example, at puberty, respondents report they began to feel "different."

(Two say they "felt different for as long as (they) can remember," but for most this feeling did not emerge until puberty.) When respondents explain how they "felt different," they give the following kinds of statements: Respondents describe feeling "out of sync with other boys," that there was "something in me that set me apart." These sensations, subtle and ambiguous at first, are also described as "alienated," "a nagging fear I was out of step with the rest of the world," "the way I saw things was different from the way others saw them."

As can be seen from these statements, the difference was initially not attributed to being homosexual. At this early stage, respondents did not know the meaning of the word, nor had most engaged in any sexual behavior. The difference was initially attributed to being a "sissy," often interpreted as "shy," "unathletic," "bookish," "delicate," "sensitive," desiring to "dress up in girls' clothes," "unmasculine," "artistic." In short, they perceived themselves as exhibiting behavior inappropriate to their age and gender role. The difference was not regarded positively, but rather was a source of pain:

> I can't bear to look at pictures of me at that age (twelve). I was so painfully shy and an awkward mess. Klutz, thin as a rake. I had a facial tick and thick glasses that used to fall down on my nose all the time.
>
> It may not be politically correct to say this but, at eleven, I was a scared, little sissy. My aunt called me "Girlie." She didn't think boys should like to draw.

A noteworthy aspect of these data is that respondents, however masculine now, recount extensive histories of effeminate behavior, even including cross-dressing. Although other researchers (Whitham 1977, 1980, 1982; Bell, Weinberg and Hammersmith 1981; Harry 1982) note femininity in homosexuals' histories, initially it was suspected that homosexuals who later became parents might have more masculine histories than others in the homosexual population and report little or no effeminacy. This does not seem to be so. As reported quotations show, effeminacy before and during puberty is a common recollection.

Since none of the respondents, at this stage, knew the meaning of the word "homosexual" (most had never heard the word), none applied the term to themselves. It was at this time, however, that respondents first began to engage in same-sex behavior -- strip poker, circle jerks, mutual masturbation.[1]

> Scout camp the summer I was thirteen, that's when it all began. At that stage of the game I was still too young to ejaculate, but I still enjoyed the dry-runs and before the summer was over, I was shooting along with the other guys.
>
> I started fooling around with a kid from church. My first love. Every Thursday night after choir practice, we'd go down to the lumber yard and fool around under the loading dock where no one could see us.

Even at this age, strong affectional ties with peers were formed by many of the respondents:

> I had two crushes in grade eight. One with a boy and one with a girl. It wasn't really sex; I'd wrestle with them and cum in my pants. The boy was our school hero and the girl was a tomboy. A couple of years ago, I ran into her at a gay pride parade and we came out to each other. Do you think I subconsciously knew she was a lesbian when I was thirteen?
>
> The kid on the next block that I fooled around with didn't know any more than I. Each week it seemed we'd muddle into something new. We started out with ordinary strip poker, then progressed to body rubbing and beating-off together. We finally stumbled onto the whole works. I really enjoyed fucking and getting fucked (pardon my French), but my friend had even more guilt and didn't like to do it much or anything. He wouldn't do a thing with his mouth like sucking cock or kissing. Now I know why, because today he's straight as can be.... By the time I started high school, I'd fooled around with half the neighborhood boys....On hot summer nights, I'd try to get as many as possible to sleep in my tent in my back yard. I'd show them sexy pictures, but lots of times they wouldn't do anything. Even so, I got a kick out of sleeping close to them in the tent. I had a kind of girlfriend too, but she was really a front to get to her brother. I'd go to their house to see his sister and find a way to lay on his bed. I got off just smelling his pillow. Unfortunately, the furthest I got was seeing him bare-assed.

Five respondents had no same-sex contact during puberty, but they remember masturbating to male fantasy images:

> I was too scared to actually do anything with any guys, but with my imagination I raised jacking-off to an art form. I once remember using the vacuum cleaner on my dick and a candle up my rear-end. I was kinkier then then I am now.
>
> I read a lot and it became grist for my fantasy mill: men's underwear ads in the catalogue, naked natives in the National Geographic, and photos of Greek sculpture in the encyclopedia (laughs).
>
> The guy who had an apartment across the hall from ours was gorgeous. I don't think he

> even knew I existed but, in the summer when he'd tan out on the grass, I'd go to my window and peek down at him and masturbate.

Two respondents recall nothing about pubertal sex experiences:

> I'm not hedging. I seriously don't remember. It's probably all for the better because I have a feeling that it was real dismal.
>
> I think sexual feelings were so terrible that I went into shock for a few years, because I simply can't recall much about the early days. I've totally blocked it. Ours was a Frontier-Mormon community so you can imagine the anti-sex attitudes.

Respondents explained away early same-sex behavior as "fooling around," "experimentation," "curiosity," or "everyone in my group seemed to be doing it so I went along too." Efforts were made to discount the behavior as inconsequential. In retrospect, however, respondents do not remember such activity as inconsequential. They believe that, compared to (preheterosexual) playmates, they thought about males more often, engaged in same-sex play with higher frequency, with more boys, and with greater enthusiasm. Several respondents describe pubertal homosexual thoughts as a "preoccupation," "obsession," or being "cock-crazy":

> I was the one who always initiated it. Yeah, I was kinda cock-crazy, I suppose. At first they enjoyed it too, but later broke it off. I wanted to continue and embarrassed myself with one guy by asking him. He told me where to go. Then I got scared that he might tell on me, so I stopped too.

What made homosexual thoughts particularly significant is that they often accompanied romantic crushes and daydreams of caressing and cuddling. One man remembers how he "doted on" an older boy whom he "followed around like a puppy." He discovered the boy's birthdate, compared their astrology charts, and kept a newspaper photo of him in his wallet. The object of his desires apparently never knew about his secret admirer, and the love went unrequited.

Another gay familyman interviewed tells of falling in love with a heterosexual classmate. Although he never managed to have sex with the boy, he still fantasizes about one adventure they had. It was during the height of the hoola hoop craze. He lured the desired classmate into a contest in which they held each other inside the same hoop and kept it spinning for fifteen minutes. Thoughts of the scene excite him even today, Other respondents mentioned romantic crushes with movie stars: Roy Rogers, Tyrone Power, and Tarzan.[2]

In spite of "feeling different," experiencing same-sex behavior and crushes, respondents, at this stage, did not regard this as having implications for their identities.

This does not mean respondents had no difficulties with the events just described. Interviewees report considerable guilt and anxiety accompanying their feelings and behaviors. Since respondents report no specific anti-gay indoctrination at this stage (although they report exposure to no pro-gay material either), the negative feelings may have been the result of general proscriptions against sex and/or nudity rather than condemnation of homosexual behavior per se. Respondents' earliest memories of sexual negativism center on scoldings for "touching" themselves or from "playing Doctor" with peers, with no specific homophobic references. One respondent said:

> It's hard to believe today, but in the 40's sex wasn't even mentioned in my house, much less the word "homosexual," not even to condemn it.

This point is underscored by Adam (1978: 32) who discusses the New York Times' policy which refused to even print the work "homosexual" until 1970.

A noteworthy aspect of these data is that people who later become husbands and fathers report extensive early homosexual histories. Before beginning the research, it was anticipated that respondents would have been "late bloomers" sexually, becoming both spouses and parents before they had time to realize their sexual desires, and that this would be a major explanation of their developmental histories. This was true, however, of only a minority (N=5). The vast majority of respondents vividly recalled pubertal (and to a lesser extent pre-pubertal) homosexual behaviors, fantasies, dreams, and romantic attachments. As said previously, however, respondents did not view this at the time as having implications for their identities.

The Problem With No Name

The primary reason why respondents did not regard their same-sex behavior as having identity implications is because they had no framework in which to make sense of the situation. Despite the fact that respondents report compelling same-sex desires ("preoccupation," "obsession"), they also report their sense of the situation was "nebulous," "ambiguous," "couldn't put my finger on what it all meant." Garfinkle (1967: 14), in another context, refers to this phenomenon as a disjunction between "underlying patterns" and "indexical particulars." One respondent gave this example:

> I was corn-holing for almost two years before I realized it had a name and it was bad. Of course, I'd heard older boys joking about queers and fruits, but I thought they were just general names of abuse like "twerp" and "creep." I had no idea that those referred to things I was doing. When I made the connection later, the guilt washed over me.
>
> For the first while it never clicked that it was a no-no. I wasn't stupid. I got good grades. But with sex I couldn't put two and two together. Maybe I didn't want to.

Later in their teens when respondents learned the word "homosexual," it was defined for them in stereotypical terms. Since the accompanying stereotypes did not seem to apply to them, they easily excluded themselves from the category. One respondent said: "At first, I thought 'homosexual' meant you wanted to wear a dress and have a sex change operation." Since he wanted neither, he perceived "homosexual" was irrelevant to him. Another respondent said he thought "homosexuals were dirty old men in park bushes" who "molest kids." Consequently, respondents felt the label "homosexual" did not apply to them. Warren (1974: 155) comments:

> [Since homosexuals are] taught to recognize homosexuals by lurid signs such as extreme effeminacy or a fiendish, warped, or debauched appearance, they are not equipped to recognize actual homosexuals [and it] provides a homosexual actor with ways out of self-labeling as a homosexual....

At its crudest level, the syllogism is: "Homosexuals are bad people. I am a good person. Therefore, I cannot be a homosexual." Popular notions of homosexuality serve to neutralize the label as personally non-relevant.

Gradually, respondents come to gain more extensive knowledge from "authorities" and peers about the meaning of "homosexual" and begin a period where they _suspect_ they _might_ be homosexual. It remains at the level of suspicion, however, since information about homosexuality continues to be remote, abstract, and dim. Moreover, the nature of "feelings" is that they do not have clear empirical referents and pubertal adolescents have impoverished vocabularies with which to articulate feelings. These conditions contribute to much uncertainty in answering the question, "Am I homosexual?"

> I was jumbled up inside, the classic crazy, mixed-up kid. I didn't know what my feelings meant, no sense of myself at all. And the funny thing is I didn't say a peep about it to anyone. At some level I must have known it was even too bad to talk about.

Ways of coming to suspect personal homosexuality are varied, as the following quotations illustrate:

> My priest told me what homosexuals are so I prayed to stop. I tried to make deals with Jesus, buy Him off. I promised I'd be good and go to church if He'd only help me get this

> monkey off my back. I felt so guilty. I didn't know what I'd done wrong to deserve it.
>
> I first thought I might be gay when I read in a book -- Burgler, I think -- that sissys are homosexuals and homosexuals are men that have sex with men. I was sort of a sissy and I had been fooling around, so it hit me like a ton of bricks. I was floored.
>
> A chum I'd been having sex with warned me we'd have to quit because it might turn us into homos. I don't know who told him, but I remember being really hurt. I knew I was different and when he tried to put a name on it, it was devastating. And I remember that was the last time. We never did it again or even mentioned it.

Confused Identities

Although ways of coming to suspect homosexuality are varied, one feature is common. None welcomed the possibility they might be homosexual; all perceived it negatively. Because of the high anxiety and confusion surrounding this stage, it is referred to as Identity Disorientation.

Respondents during Stage One are typically upset, anxious, and sometimes filled with self-hate and despair.[3] Their identity is highly nebulous; they are in a state of not knowing who they are. Although suspecting they are homosexual, they hope not.

Much psychiatric literature on homosexuals (Hatterer 1970; Bieber _et al_. 1962, 1969) when describing the initial visits of homosexual patients, describes persons in the identity disorientation stage of identity development. The patient's anxiety at this stage is not over his homosexual behavior _per se_ (as indicated, some respondents had done little more than think about homosexual acts), but rather his inability to either embrace it or reject it. Because homosexuality figures so highly in his consciousness ("ruminative obsessions"), he is sometimes described as having "homosexual panic" (Socarides 1968).

> I was terribly depressed. I cried a lot. I'd come home from school and lie on my bed and just cry my eyes out. My parents and sisters had no idea or anything. That was the first time I attempted suicide. As I remember it, I took five aspirins. Five aspirins. I was pretty dumb.
>
> I was completely fucked up, but trying hard to act normal. Every day was a trauma. I couldn't walk down the hall at school without thinking everyone was looking at me and suspecting. Gay feelings tortured me. I felt I was the only one in the world. I thought, "Why me?" I could write a book about it.

Others used techniques to try to deny to themselves their homosexuality, but success was limited. Some told themselves their homosexual interest was the result of physical or social limitations (skinny, short, obese, sickly, pimply, shy, poor) and that they would be heterosexual once they overcame these handicaps.[4]

> I told myself I jerked off to muscle magazines because I was fat, and I figured that once my body developed I wouldn't need to admire other guys anymore.
>
> I had the worst zits and was ashamed to say boo to anyone. Maybe worry about my homosexuality gave me zits and the zits made my shy. I'm not sure how it fit together, but together they made me a social cripple.... As soon as I looked better, I knew I could have the courage to date.

Other common denial strategies included:

> I thought I was just over-sexed and that as soon as girls would let me near them, I'd stop doing other boys. Yeah, really. Of course, I was kidding myself, but if anyone had told me that then, I would have called them a liar.
>
> I was convinced I was just going through a phase. I thought the feelings would go away when I matured and became a man. Books said I would outgrow it, but the stage seemed longer for me than for other kids, and I was worried why it was hanging on this long.

Regardless of the denial strategies, respondents had a profound suspicion that there was "something in me that might be homosexual." Although many indicators of this suspicion have been mentioned, it is the combination of both same-sex erotic behavior and same-sex affection that most sensitized respondents to their possible homosexuality. In Western culture (although not worldwide), these acts and attachments are commonly understood to indicate homosexuality. Respondents take cues from their cultural understandings in developing meanings about themselves.

The time lap, however, between the attachments/acts and self-suspicion ranges from several months to several years; hence the connection between the attachments/acts and self-suspicion is far from instantaneous. This lag is explained by the fact that interpretations of many behaviors (but especially same-sex behaviors in Western society) have a range of plausible explanations. During the time lag, respondents "try on" several possible alternative interpretations ("oversexed," "fat," "too many zits") before allowing that they might be homosexual.

As said previously, genital acts with and emotional attachments to other boys are the primary experiences to initiate subsequent ponderings over potential homosexuality. These, however, are not the only indicators. Two respondents, for example, came to suspect themselves without any same-sex emotional/genital experiences. These "homosexual virgins'" suspicions were rooted in behavior which they perceived as inappropriate for their age and gender role ("liked sewing and dressing up;" "I was delicate"), from reading books on homosexuality and from identifying with the homosexuals described therein. This suggests there are several sources for homosexual self-suspicion and also several ways in which meanings are assembled and built-up.

With these considerations in mind, why did respondents during stage one find labeling themselves as homosexual so problematic? First, the discovery of self as gay is complicated by the fact that the carriers of gay identity (unlike racial/ethnic identity) are not usually one's biological parents (Adam 1978: 16). That is, development of a gay identity involves secondary socialization rather than primary socialization (see Brim and Wheeler, 1966). Second, in order to self label, it is necessary to know the existence of the category "homosexual." Third, the category must have a positive connection before respondents attribute it to themselves. Fourth, private cognitions about homosexuality need to be reconciled with public beliefs about homosexuality. Misconceptions about gay life prevent such a reconciliation. Since respondents did not experience these criteria at this stage, they did not label themselves "homosexual." The following vignette demonstrates how these factors affected the identity conflict resolution of one respondent.

An interviewee said that his parents were divorced when he was twelve, and he went with his mother to live in a mobile home park where he began associating with a neighbor boy. The two of them were "social outcasts" at school because they were from "the wrong side of the tracks," were poor, and had unmarried mothers. The respondent and his friend became "inseparable" playmates and also began engaging in mutual masturbation in a field near the trailer park. The relationship continued for "about two years" when the neighbor boy's mother and father re-united and the boy moved away to "a nice area." It was not until this time that the respondent realized he "loved" his friend, was lonesome without him, and even began to have dreams and nocturnal emissions about him. The respondent believes realization of his love precipitated a "nervous breakdown" where he engaged in rages and vandalism in an effort to deal with his suspected homosexuality.

Although relationships among the many variables are confounded and there exist several possible interpretations, this vignette illustrates the connection between same-sex erotic behavior and same-sex affection as part of the process toward homosexual self-suspicion. Sexual meanings, as this case demonstrates, are built up over time.

Also operative in this vignette is what may be called a "spill-over effect." Events that have a relatively clear sexual meaning (male-male mutual masturbation) are linked by the respondent to events where the sexual meaning is unclear (vandalism). In retrospect, the respondent can interpret vandalism as masculine protest behavior and view it as "evidence" to cover feelings of effeminacy and homosexuality. It is difficult to discern whether the spill-over connection was made during puberty or is merely a retrospective (re)interpretation. In any case, these events provided sources for subsequent worryings about possible homosexuality. From relatively innocuous behavior (mutual masturbation) and initial sensitization of difference, experiences may become heightened and acquire significance so that they provide clues for later ponderings about homosexuality.

It should be noted that the process of answering the question, "Who do I feel I am?" is primarily an intrapersonal experience. Few respondents come to the answer through discussions with significant others, not even with their sexual partners. Most respondents merely think about it to themselves. This brings us to the second part of the SSR matrix: "Who do I announce myself to be?"

WHO DO I ANNOUNCE MYSELF TO BE?

Since in this stage, homosexuality is perceived as an "unsharable problem" (Cressey 1971), respondents do not announce themselves as homosexual:

> My feelings were literally unspeakable. When boys talked about sex, I was silent. They were always there just under the surface and I wanted to blurt it out many times, but I knew it had to be avoided like the plague.

Factors other than fear of stigma contribute to this silence. Homosexuality is regarded as an intensely personal attribute ("only-one-in-the-world" feeling), and others are regarded as unlikely to understand. Longlaws and Schwartz (1977) comment: "The sexual identity that deviates from the dominant script suffers from an absence of validation as well as from invalidation, or negative sanctions imposed by those who assume roles in the dominant script."

Additionally, the homosexual feelings may be nebulous and, consequently, there is an inability to verbally communicate the subtle feelings and perceptions. A respondent comments:

> I was scared because I couldn't understand what was happening. You know what it's like when you're a foreigner who doesn't know the currency and just goes through the motions trying to fake it. Well, that was me. I felt so cut off.

Berger and Luckmann (1966: 141) go so far as to say that society does not even provide language to properly express the unique feelings of outsiders:

> There is no standard language to describe or express experiences and identities which are not socially recognized. Consequently, it is

> difficult for individuals to communicate about such phenomena. But without such communication, the validation of these experiences by others is impossible, and their reality, for lack of verbal recognition, becomes shaky.

If respondents do not announce themselves to be homosexual, how do they proclaim themselves? They announce themselves to be heterosexual or, more commonly, they do not explicitly announce themselves to be either gay or straight, but imply they are heterosexual by making no announcements to the contrary. They try to fit in, be like everyone else, and be accepted.

HOW DO OTHERS PERCEIVE ME?

Regarding the third part of the matrix, the following is relevant: Eighty-two per cent said they had been perceived as "sissy" by significant others. Only one respondent, however, felt he was perceived at this stage as "homosexual" and this was by classmates. A possible reason why so few respondents were perceived as "homosexual" is because adults are reluctant to label pubescent children "homosexual." Adolescents are given "the benefit of the doubt," and it is believed that whatever it is about the adolescent that makes him different will pass with maturation and he will become heterosexual.

Being misperceived by others makes respondents feel deceitful and as if they have "no real friends," since no one knows what is on their minds. One respondent says, "With friends, I felt a sham. If they knew what I was thinking, they'd hate me." This exacerbates earlier experiences of "feeling different" and of "alienation." These data support Longlaws and Schwartz's (1977: 11) comment: "There is a nightmarish quality about having an identity which is not socially validated."

Uneasy identity is similarly discussed in the literature of the identity difficulties of blacks. For example, the absence of a valid identity is expressed clearly in the titles of two books on black identity, Ellison's Invisible Man and Baldwin's Nobody Knows My Name.

The significant others during this stage who are especially crucial are parents, particularly mothers. Respondents recall mothers perceiving them as "sissies" and taking steps to remedy the situation. Lofland calls people who take such action on the behalf of others "normal smiths." They are people who, through craftsmanlike skills, help restore and maintain conventional identities for supposed deviants. They deny (sometimes in the face of "clear" evidence) that individuals are unconventional (Lofland 1969: 209). (Clergy and mental health professionals and their books also act as normal smiths.) They impute "normality" by telling the person he is mistaken, that he will grow out of it. They delabel him from the "sissy" designation. For the respondents in this study, normal smiths helped respondents isolate the deviant status and compartmentalize their perceptions about homosexuality. This sets the stage for moving on to part two of identity development, Identity Marginality.[5]

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Stage One marks the transition from asexuality to suspicion that one is sexually different, namely that one may be homosexual. Respondents answer the first part of the matrix with: (researcher's paraphrase) "I was confused about feeling different and I didn't know if this meant I was gay or not." The second part of the matrix is typically answered with: "I didn't tell people about my feelings, but silence was, by default, a heterosexual announcement." The third part of the matrix is answered with statements like this: "Others saw me as an asexual sissy who was pre-heterosexual." In short, respondents did not have a valid homosexual identity since there is incongruence among the three parts of the matrix. The next chapter details the steps taken by respondents to resolve this identity conflict.

NOTES

[1] Similarly, Weinberg in his study of nudists (1968: 240-241), found respondents gave the topic of nudism little thought prior to becoming a nudist. Fifty percent said they had "not really given it any thought." In the words of Matza (1964), respondents "drift" into the behavior. However, while drift may be responsible for the initial acts, later, more committed stages are achieved by painful searching and negotiation with both the self and larger world.

[2] Kinsey et al. (1948: 624) report that 36% of males have pubertal homosexual experience to the point of orgasm, yet only a small fraction of them have a homosexual orientation (see, also, Kirkendall 1961). What, if anything, distinguishes the pubertal homosexual experience of pregay from preheterosexual adolescents? It is speculated that the pregay ones attach an affectional component to the activity, while the preheterosexual ones experience it only at a physical level. The data from the present study suggest this possibility, but they are not sufficient to test the hypothesis and future research along this line is warranted.

[3] This is not to imply that guilt or conflicts about sexuality are unique to homosexual adolescents. However, homosexuals are likely to feel guilt and conflict about their sexual orientation in addition to whatever reaction they may have to their sexuality per se (Kimmel 1978: 117).

[4] Lack of physical prowess and non-interest in sports for males may be seen as indicative of atypical gender-role orientation. When gender-role orientation is confused with sexual orientation, as often happens especially in "popular wisdom," homosexuality is suspected. This confusion opens the way for another social source of self and other labeling.

[5] An important conceptual point grows out of the question: If the three matrix components are incongruent at the end of this stage, then what is the respondents' identity? A researcher taking Goffman's (1962) theoretical stance and his concern with "spoiled reputation" might say the "real" person is that which corresponds to prevalent social categories and place most weight on the answer to: "How do others see me?"

By contrast, an existential sociologist (Douglas and Johnson 1977) who locates the "real" person in the actor's self-perceptions would tend to place the emphasis on the answer to the question, "Who do I feel I am?" The advantage of the SSR model is that it takes both vantage points into consideration. The SSR model maintains that the answers to each matrix question are all equally valid indicators of identity. Individuals do not have a valid identity, however, until the components of the matrix are congruent. At the end of stage one, the respondents hold separate identities with separate audiences. This establishes the interpersonal uneasiness and other conditions for moving to the second stage of identity conflict resolution, Identity Marginality.

CHAPTER SIX

STAGE TWO: IDENTITY MARGINALITY

> It happens often enough that the lie begun in self-defense slips into self-deception.
>
> --Jean Paul Sartre
> Being and Nothingness

INTRODUCTION

While the first stage primarily involves sensitization to "feeling different" and the thought processes surrounding that, the second stage involves a heightening of the uncomfortable feelings and active ways of managing them. Social meanings are built up over time so that respondents recognize the implications of their feelings and behaviors and implement activities designed to control both the behaviors and subjective meanings. In Stage Two, therefore, confusion and turmoil are reduced, if only because they are more successfully pushed down.

It may sound like a contradiction to say that in Stage Two gay feelings are heightened and at the same time say they are repressed. This, however, is the irony of secrecy described by Simmel (1950). When material is pushed down through secrecy, he claims, "an inward spiralling" takes place:

> From secrecy...grows the typical error according to which everything mysterious is something important and essential. Before the unknown, man's natural impulse to idealize and his natural fearfulness cooperate toward the goal: to intensify the unknown through imagination, and to pay

> attention to it with an emphasis that is not usually accorded to patent reality (1950: 333).

Moreover, as Simmel notes, secrecy is not simply an intrapersonal event. Secrecy extends in importance beyond the secret itself and features of the secret world. The secret has profound effects on the social relations of secret-keepers and affects the trajectory which such relationships subsequently take. Thus, secrecy affects both the internal relations of the people involved and relations with the larger world. It is in this way that secrecy impacts on identity development.

This chapter is divided into three parts corresponding to the three parts of the matrix: 1) Who do I feel I am? 2) Who do I announce myself to be? 3) How do significant others perceive me? In each part, there is discussion that explains the inportant role of secrecy in identity formation.

WHO DO I FEEL I AM?

In spite of the accounts and normal smithing of Stage One and the secrecy maneuvers of Stage Two, respondents continue to report difficulty in answering, "Who do I feel I am?" This is explained partly by repression being a common coping strategy:

> In my heart of hearts, [homosexuality] was there, but I wouldn't let it surface anymore because it was too painful. I pushed it back, way, way back. I didn't have permission to consider it. Permission from society, permission from myself.

> No, no, not me. I was determined not to give in to gay feelings. Shit, I was sure if I did my life would be over before it even got started.

Unable to acknowledge gay feelings and lacking a sense of integration into heterosexual culture, respondents feel they may be "bisexual." It is difficult for some to recall details of this period, a fact possibly explained by repression, or perhaps by the usual teenage process of trying on multiple roles and discarding them until one is found that seems to "fit." It may also be explained by the passage of time or by the extensive use of secrecy and passing:

> Anything I say about this is really ball-park... If I was there today, I'd say I was possibly bisexual but...but in those days, "bisexual" wasn't heard of, at least not in Ohio [laughs]. ...I didn't let myself apply labels to myself. I told myself so many stories and they changed almost weekly that I lost track of who I felt I really was. My brains were like a dog's breakfast.
>
> My sister, she was big in the hippy thing and she had all these underground papers around... I always read the classifieds -- a lot of kinda bi sorts of people advertised, '60s stuff, and I said, "Well, maybe I'm bi too." That's what I said. It sorta jived. And it certainly seemed better than being totally queer.
>
> Deep down, I knew. I knew what I wanted, but with a little practice I thought I had it in me to be both. I thought I could get away with it.

For some people, bisexuality may be a fact, but in retrospect, these respondents felt that it was an account[1] to ward off homosexual identification. It was especially popular among upper-middle class respondents and it tended to become an increasingly elaborate account the longer respondents held to it. For example, some came to regard themselves as part of a latter-day classical Greek revival or believed they were among the avant garde cognoscenti. They buttressed this perception by pointing to famous, avowed bisexuals in the media, and by giving selected attention to popularized theories that claim "everyone is bisexual." By emphasizing that everyone is like them "if only they'd admit it," respondents reduced feelings of alienation and feeling different carried over from Stage One and neutralized homosexual behavior.

The account is further strengthened by respondents aligning themselves with "tolerant liberals" who view bisexuality, not as a perversion, but as an "eccentricity." According to respondents, the worlds of the visual and performing arts, especially music, dance, and theatre, offer supportive contexts. (A respondent's ex-wife reflecting on his bisexual period said, "[His bisexuality] was rife with the hostility of the spoiled nouveau riche, 'Look at me, I can have everything.'")

The mix of homosexual to heterosexual behavior appears unrelated to whether or not a person adopts a bisexual label (see, for example, Blumstein and Schwartz 1976). At this stage some respondents were having exclusive homosexual experiences, yet they still called themselves "bisexual" because they believed they were potentially heterosexual: "I thought I could make it with girls if and when I wanted to."

Accounts to Avoid Homosexual Self-Identification

Answering "bisexual" to the question "Who do I feel I am?" required respondents to manufacture accounts which buttressed this perception. The use of accounts to justify, explain away, and neutralize behavior is not unique to gay familymen. Wiseman (1970) refers to accounts by alcoholics: "I'm just between jobs." Cressey (1971) and Millman (1980) report accounts by embezzlers ("I'm only borrowing") and the obese ("I'm merely big-boned").

In Stage Two, respondents adopted many accounts to strengthen their answer to "Who do I feel I am?" This research has detected primarily six themes in such accounts: masculinity, sexual opportunism, diffused responsibility, free spirit, restricted time space, and special case. These accounts serve to protect the bisexual identity by warding off homosexual identification.

1) Masculinity. Respondents may claim that either they or their partner is "too masculine to be homosexual." Masculinity is perceived in physical attributes (e.g., large genitals, strength), non-swishy demeanor, or by playing the trade role (insertor) in sex.

A variation on this account is that respondents perceive they are "not really gay" since they are attracted to only heterosexual men ("Gays weren't good enough for me." "How could I be gay if just straight guys turned me on?").

The reasoning follows that, since the partner is masculine or heterosexual, this is not a homosexual act and the respondent is, therefore, not homosexual either. Insulated from homosexual identity, participants reconceptualize their behavior as merely sexual release: "getting my rocks off," "relieving myself."

2) Sexual Opportunism. Respondents may claim they are not homosexual because they are not interested in men *per se*, but rather any kind of sex that is available ("I'd fuck anything that moved"). Since men are perceived as more sexually available than women, sex with men is merely a function of easier opportunity rather than indicative of any underlying homosexual orientation. Humphreys (1975: 119) reports this rationalization from tearoom respondents such as: "I don't care if it's a man, woman, or dog that's licking my cock; all I want is a hole." Respondents may further claim that it is "only natural" for a man to respond to whatever sexual opportunities are available and that this suggests nothing about sexual orientation. This rationalization might be credible were it not for the fact that, on further probing, respondents reveal they have sex with not just any man, but only with men they deem "attractive."

3) Diffused Responsibility. Respondents may avoid homosexual self-identity by attributing responsibility for initiating their same-sex behavior to someone else. They may view themselves as "victims" of someone's premeditated act. Like Eichmann, they may plead they were caught up in another person's desire and were merely swept along by the events. Triangulated data indicate, however, that people

stating this rationalization are often skilled at seducing others into making the first move.

Responsibility may be diffused by blaming another person for one's homosexual behavior, or it may be diffused by blaming the environmental context. People may excuse their homosexual behavior by attributing it to confinement in same-sex settings (boarding school, armed services, prison, isolated camp). Men who come out through swinging sometimes excuse their early homosexual behavior as merely getting "carried away" in an orgy situation.

Both the environment and another person are blamed in some accounts. For example, homosexual behavior may be readily excused if it occurs in the context of "sleep" or "drunkeness." Warren (1974: 156) refers to this as the "Gawd,-I-was-so-drunk-last-night-I-can't-remember-a-thing-we-did syndrome." The implication fostered by such accounts is that if the homosexually-acting person associated with more conventional people or in more conventional contexts, the homosexual behavior would disappear.

4) Free Spirit. Respondents may avoid homosexual identification by eschewing "labels." They refuse to refer to either themselves or their behavior as homosexual: "I hate labels," "I'm not a category." When pressed, it becomes clear that these respondents prefer labels that have imprecise allegiances: "I'm human," "I'm just myself," or as stated previously, "I'm bisexual." While these statements indicate a "free spirit" attitude, ironically

respondents report their same-sex behavior to be compulsive or driven: "I didn't want to do those things, but I was driven to do it."

Along with the free spirit account, respondents report unstable self-concepts -- one day thinking they are homosexual and another day thinking they are not. It is unknown if this is antecedent, consequent, or unrelated to the refusal to self-label.

Reluctance to label same-sex activity as homosexual is not because respondents hate labels *per se*; indeed they present themselves to significant others under labels such as "student," "Christian," and "Canadian." Rather they dislike a label that calls attention to behaviors they would prefer to forget. The free spirit account allows respondents to avoid responsibility for involvement in homosexual behavior and avoid homosexual identification.

5) Restricted Time Space. Respondents may claim that their behavior is only temporary, that it is limited to a particular time period. Respondents may say they are only "passing through a phase," that this is the "sowing of their wild oats," where they "experiment" and "try everything once" and will soon "out-grow it." They assert their homosexuality is not an intrinsic quality, but rather temporary while they "wait for the right girl to come along." Beyond adolescence, the credibility of this account becomes increasingly difficult to sustain.

Another difficulty with this account is that it encourages respondents to have a postponed identity, and even to live a postponed life. Respondents are encouraged to discount present life circumstances as temporary, "not the real me." "Real life" is judged to come when gay feelings are eliminated and total heterosexuality is achieved. Respondents subscribing to this account often come to see gay feelings as the root of all their troubles and that life will be bliss when heterosexuality is achieved. They may believe that only the "curse" of gay feelings keeps them from realizing their potential or when this "blemish" is overcome, everything in their lives will change for the better. Consequently, respondents suspend the present and live in the future when the hoped for transformation to heterosexuality (and happiness) will occur. Faith in the millennium sustains respondents through their present discomfort. Said one respondent: "I knew when I became straight, I'd be perfect."

This account has been noted with other stigmatized statuses. For example, Millman (1980) says that obese people often tell themselves that when they lose weight, they will be beautiful and loveable. Festinger et al., (1956) report that ascetic cultists tell themselves that when the end of the world comes they will be chosen by God to be near Him in Heaven. The account of restricted time space is particularly relevant to homosexuality since homosexuality is a stigma that often manifests itself at a young age and where respondents are encouraged by well-meaning adults that they will "grow out of it," that "it's a passing stage." Respondents wait for a potential event, biding time in the present, living in a yet-to-be-realized fantasy world where they believe they will, at last, be happy and normal. This "restricted time space" account not only wards off homosexual identity, it in effect, defers identity.

6) Special Case. Respondents may avoid a homosexual self identity by interpreting their same-sex behavior as merely a special friendship. In such cases, the person has only one partner with whom he has gay sex and believes that no one else of his sex could excite him. These relationships are often close and highly romanticized. The person may perceive this as a unique situation and not recognize it as homosexual because it does not conform to stereotype. If they think of homosexuality at all, they may conceive of it as "promiscuous" behavior done by "degenerates," not by people like themselves who are loyal and who love each other.

Ironically, the opposite of this account is similarly powerful in avoiding homosexual identification. Respondents may say that since their homosexual contacts are fleeting, promiscuous, genitally-focused, and non-emotional, they "do not mean anything" and, therefore, the participants cannot be homosexual. This latter example indicates the "logic" of accounts is problematic. Whether the same-sex behavior is warmly emotional or cooly mechanical, it can be interpreted as non-homosexual. Either way, a non-deviant self-image is maintained.

However, for the participants, the "logic" is unimportant. What is important is the purpose the accounts serve: to avoid homosexual identification. These accounts help people deny homosexuality while practicing it. They can continue to feel they are non-homosexual since the accounts deny homosexuality as an orientation (number 5), if not deny it altogether (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6).

The accounts may be used singly or simultaneously or they may be used serially over time. As one account becomes strained or transparent, another can be adopted to take its place. Homosexual self-identification, therefore, can be avoided indefinitely (one respondent recalls using such accounts for over forty years). Respondents still need not answer "homosexual" to the question, "Who do I feel I am?"

IDENTITY AND THE DECISION TO MARRY

When it is known that a gay man is married some of the questions asked are: "Did he realize the seriousness of what he was doing?" "How could he be so deceitful?" "Who was he trying to kid?" (Young 1975: 195). In short, how did he think of himself to motivate such behavior? This section addresses this question within the framework of the Strauss-Stone-Rainwater matrix's first inquiry: "Who do I feel I am?"

In the depth interviews, it is difficult to separate out specific motives for marriage and the perceptions surrounding them. Retrospective perceptions are reinterpreted in light of current life adjustments and respondents' memories of courtship years are likely influenced by events subsequent to those years. As Kiesler (1977: 59) says, accounts are difficult to assess in terms of cause and effect:

> First, action -- even decisions -- can be precipitated by fortuitous environmental or social conditions of which the individual is barely aware, or they may evolve from earlier commitments to a pattern of behavior. Second, attitudes, values, and even perceived incentives or constraints, which seemingly led to an action, might actually have followed from them. Action must be viewed as a potential _cause_ of attributes, perceptions, and other actions, as well as an effect (emphasis in original).

Because of this caveat, only two gross categories of motives are suggested to account for gay men's marriages, both of them identified by respondents: 1) Negative assessment of the gay world, 2) Romanticization of marriage and its perceived benefits.

Negative Assessment of the Gay World

Respondents negatively assessed the gay world which made them reluctant to identify and affiliate with it. Some might explain this assessment by saying respondents "internalized" society's anti-gay attitudes, although psychological processes such as internalization are not readily observable. There are more parsimonious explanations to account for respondents' negative perceptions. For example, respondents knew of society's anti-gay attitudes and did not want to be ridiculed so they defensively adopted similarly negative attitudes. Also, respondents, being marginal to the gay world, lacked information about the gay world:

> I would have come out before marriage, but I didn't know where to come out to. I didn't know "gay community." I knew the bus depot with toilet sex. Come out and risk everything for that? Not on your life.

Uninformed about actual gay life, respondents accept the negative "popular wisdom."

In addition, respondents had lives structured so that they selectively perceived only the negative aspects of gay life. Furtive forays into the gay world for quick, genitally-focused sex and then back to their heterosexual friends, did not allow respondents to make gay friends or to view the gay world as a warm, hospitable place. Even respondents who glimpsed positive aspects of the gay world did not question their generally negative perceptions, but merely regarded these aspects as "exceptions" and continued to subscribe to generally negative perceptions.

Another aspect of respondents' negative assessments about the gay world was that they tended to view homosexuality as mutually exclusive from other important life goals. Many openly gay people integrate their homosexuality into their lives along with occupational, social, and other goals. Homosexuality is taken in stride and does not drastically exclude or alter other priorities. By contrast, respondents defined the decision around homosexuality as a dichotomy: A person could either be openly gay and organize a life around "loveless promiscuity" and social outcast status or try to be heterosexual and organize a conventional, respectable life with social and occupational success. They could not see themselves simultaneously as worthwhile people and as homosexuals. When the situation is conceptualized in such either/or terms, it increases the likelihood that one will not identify oneself as gay or join the gay community.

Not only were respondents reluctant to affiliate with the gay world, they were actively hostile toward it. Respondents recall characterizing the gay world with such negative evaluations as "shallow," "irresponsible," "bitchy," "fucked-up," "superficial," "transitory," "snobbish," "unstable," "a waste of time," "swishy," "cheap and flashy," "cliquish," "full of blackmail and violence." Other respondents were more graphic in their negative descriptions: "I didn't want to grow up to be an alcoholic auntie in makeup sitting alone in a seedy bar." Another said: "There were only back-biting queens and me." These negative assessments facilitated avoidance of gay identity.[2]

Negative gay sexual experiences. Besides negatively assessing the gay world in general, some respondents reserved their negative assessments for gay sexual experiences specifically. Guilt and confusion about gay sex diminished its pleasure and made respondents doubt their homosexuality. Also, respondents perceived they were homosexually unskilled, a perception that contributed to their awkwardness:

> The sex was okay, but hardly worth the hassle I went through before and after. The guys I wanted didn't want me....I was exhausted from wandering the streets and haunting the baths. All the games and guilt took away the fun. [Q] I figured if I'm this inept at it, then maybe I'm not really gay afterall.

By contract, other respondents experienced more gay sex than they could cope with, but the results were the same: unpleasant experiences, guilt, and rejection of the gay world.

> I'd had it with gay hedonism up to my forehead. Just mechanical, anonymous sex with too many faceless tricks. I read The City and The Pillar and, even though I thought it was too flattering of gay life, it rang bells. Here I was from a respectable family -- my father would've died -- hanging around with irresponsible queens who'd make nothing of their lives....I didn't want to be led around by my cock. Enough was too much.
>
> All they gave me was "Wham, bam, thank you ma'm," and I needed to be held and touched and loved by a man.

Another respondent half-humorously described his premarital gay sex as "nasty, brutal, and short." Gay sex was perceived as too promiscuous and genitally focused to offer lasting fulfillment:

> It was a sewer of disappointments. No exaggeration. It could only satisfy my dick, and not even that very often. It was so demoralizing to have a trick at night and the next morning eat breakfast alone.

Some respondents were dissuaded from embracing gay identity and led to marry by homosexual experiences that were traumatic, even violent. One man, for example, was caught flagrante delicto with an army friend and dishonorably discharged after a "humiliating investigation." Another was hospitalized when attacked by gay bashers while cruising a city park. Another respondent experienced gay violence vicariously when his two closest friends died violently. One was murdered by a hitchhiker he solicited for sex, and the other committed suicide in a drunken stupor. These events persuaded the respondent that gay life "was not very gay" and "a horror to be avoided at all costs."

Besides negatively assessing the gay world in general, and gay sexual experiences in particular, respondents even assessed their premarital gay love _relationships_ as unsatisfactory, as the next section makes clear.

Negative gay relationships. Several respondents describe premarital gay love relationships that became unpleasant and which led respondents to see the gay world as unfulfilling, to doubt their homosexuality, and eventually, to marry. For example, one respondent recalled his first lover and he had "a heavy role-play relationship" with "lots of fights": "To spite me, he ran off with half my belongings and married my ex-girlfriend." The respondent was so "devastated" that he moved away and also married. Another respondent said:

> Everyone was so so closeted then. My lover and I weren't out to anyone except each other. You couldn't trust anyone else. It was the two of us against the world.... Relating out of fear isn't healthy and the closetry and self-hate soon ruined our relationship.

Another respondent told about a lover who was killed in World War II. He interpreted this as a sign that gay life was "inherently tragic" and that he should leave it by marrying.

Part of respondents' negative evaluation of gay relationships stemmed from the fact that, before marriage, few respondents personally experienced a reciprocal gay love relationship. Either someone loved them that they disliked, or more commonly, they fell in love with someone who rejected them. For example, one respondent cites an unpleasant "love" relationship he had with a heterosexual man:

> The guy had a body I'd die for, so I let him use me for two years as almost his servant. He sensed I needed his approval and exploited me left and right. I hated myself so much for being gay, I was an easy victim. And the infuriating thing is that not once did he give me even so much as a meaningful kiss. Mindfucker. I still boil.

Before marriage, this was the closest the respondent came to a love relationship. He thought, "If this is what it's like being gay, then who needs it."

Falling in love with heterosexual men was a commonly reported premarital experience of respondents. This partly explains why respondents seldom report reciprocal gay love relationships. However, respondents usually fraternized with heterosexual men, so it is not surprising they missed opportunities to become romantically involved with gays. By structuring their gay lives in such a way as to remain undetected, by limiting gay involvement, and by pretending to be non-gay, respondents confirmed existing biases about the non-viability of gay life.

There is an irony here: to the extent that the closeted homosexual is successful in passing and making himself invisible, so he cuts himself off from and is removed from contact with other homosexuals who could give sexual gratification and emotional support. The closeted homosexual, therefore, is in a double bind: the more successful he is at "saving face," the less successful he is at finding gay love (Plummer 1975: 181). The absence of experiencing a reciprocal gay love involvement, appears to be a necessary condition in order for a gay man to marry.

Paucity of gay role models. Lack of gay role models made it difficult for respondents to view the gay world in a positive light, to see it as offering a viable lifestyle for them, and to see themselves as gay:

> I simply couldn't conceive of life as an unmarried gay man. I just couldn't. I didn't know anyone who'd done it. There must have been some, but I didn't run across them....Every gay man who wasn't married to a girl, at least dated them. You got to remember it was a very different scene than today. Who had heard of loving gay couples? "Gay love" was a contradiction in terms.

Besides lacking unmarried gay role models, respondents report many role models of gay married men. They provided examples of how matrimony and gay sex could be combined. Respondents, therefore, did not see homosexuality as an impediment to marriage:

> Let me tell you about a very important thing that happened to me. I was just thinking about this last night when I was going over what I'd tell you today. My brother-in-law is the dirty dog in all this. One weekend, the house was crowded -- this is before I was married -- and I wound up having to share a bed with him. First thing I knew he was all over me. I mean nothing subtle at all. From that, I got the impression that all men, whatever their desires, got hitched then made do with whatever they could get on the side. I said to myself, "Oh, so this is the way it's done." I thought my homosexuality wouldn't make any difference at all....But wait, here's the kicker. [Brother-in-law] is on his fourth marriage now and still up to the same shenanigans and shows no sign of coming out of the closet, and I'm left holding the bag.

Another respondent who had been a prostitute for a short while reported that many of his clients were married men, and he saw no reason why he could not do the same -- wed and have gay sex "by the sly" when the need arose. Several respondents were active in the visual and performing arts where they met men participating occasionally in sex with males. They saw nothing to stop them from having a similar lifestyle. They thought this arrangement might provide "the best of both worlds."

The above material makes clear the connections among respondents' negative assessments of the gay world, its impact on their sexual identity, and their decision to marry. This, however, is only part of the picture. In understanding identity and the decision to marry, it is necessary to also assess respondents' positive perceptions of the heterosexual world.

Positive Perceptions of the Heterosexual World

Western society romanticizes courtship and marriage (Hobart 1958), and gay people are not immune to such influence. The reasons gay men give for marrying differ little from what heterosexuals report. Love for an individual woman is important. Frequently mentioned, as well, are family pressures, the "inevitability" of marriage, occupational and economic pressures, pre-marital pregnancy, a desire to emulate respected friends and to have children. Finally there is fear of loneliness and need for companionship.

Love. Of all the reasons people give for marriage, "love" is the most respectable. The word, however, can be interpreted variously. Respondents tended to interpret the love that motivated their marriages as "interest compatibility" more than "sexual desire."

> I married her because I loved her. I'm not sure it was physical as much as intellectual -- but it was still love. We shared a lot of ideas about design and talked for hours and never were bored.
>
> This is hard. It's hard for me to admit, but I don't think I loved her the way you mean, or the way she understood it. She was my best friend, my only friend at the time, and I don't think I lied when I told her I loved her.

Besides mentioning the compatibility, respondents cited the woman's intelligence, her social skills and sensitivity to their concerns as important components of love. One respondent, however, was equivocal since the present colored his perception of past love:

> [Q] Not really. At the time it was romantic with hearts and flowers, etcetera, etcetera. The whole heavy trip. Look at me, you know me, I'm a pushover for that sort of thing.... When I compare it to the loves I've had with men, I have to say no. Sex was surprisingly good with [Sue] and we had friends in common, but we were never on the same wave length. I never trusted her....[Tom--lover] taught me what love means, not [Sue]....I told her I loved her more than I loved anyone, which was true at the time, but remember, I didn't have much experience. My capacity for love has expanded tremendously since then.

With these qualifications in mind, "love" remains a significant reason for respondents' marriages.

Pressure from family and significant others. Family pressure to marry was especially intense for those respondents from ethnic or highly religious backgrounds. One respondent said: "Not to marry was an insult to God and our heritage. You'd be ostracized from the whole family; you might as well be dead." One man reports a relative left a will that made it essential for him to wed in order to collect his inheritance. Another respondent remembers:

> When I was in college, my mother would send me clippings from the hometown newspaper of highschool chums' marriages. Subtle, huh? You don't know my mother. I got the third degree on who my girlfriend was and badgered about all the details. My sister got in on it too and they were forever trying to set me up with someone. It was done joking, but I knew they were really very serious....I wanted to make them proud of me.
>
> We really got married to satisfy our parents,[3] but we thought we had enough interests in common to pull it off. But the fact of the matter is that we were kids and never conceived of failure and divorce. When you're 19 those

> things just don't occur to you. At that age everything's possible and you're going to lick the world, right?

Pressure from significant others included church officials, mental health professionals and friends. As a result of parents hearing children call a son names, a respondent remembers he was taken to a minister to be "saved." The clergyman told him his "sinful urges would disappear if I established a deeper faith in God."

Another respondent says:

> My counselor turned out to be a seminary dropout who later earned a psychology degree so I had a double-whammy. The shrink told me what I was dying to hear -- 'A person as nice as you couldn't be homosexual.'

The psychologist told the respondent to masturbate to pictures of women and to find a woman with whom he could practice coitus. He did this and even had pre-marital counseling with the woman. The psychologist pronounced the respondent "cured," and although he did not marry the woman with whom he had counseling, he married another woman a year later.[4]

A similar case is related by Hatterer (1970: 137), a psychiatrist, who tells a homosexual patient: "I've known a lot of patients who've been successful doing similar kinds of things [courting women]. You should get a subscription to Playboy." On the other hand, Freund (1974: 32), also a psychiatrist, calls such advice "unprofessional" and comments:

> Men who have contracted marriage out of therapeutic prodding seemed to be very happy for about a year but, in the course of time,

> the heterosexual adjustment usually deteriorated and they were left with a virtually non-functional marriage and greater problems than those which they had had prior to therapy.

Marriage appealed to those respondents who romanticized the unions of heterosexual friends. Since respondents had suffered feeling "different," thoughts of being like the majority were compelling. One respondent said at twenty-one he realized he had never been in love and he "panicked." Everyone he knew and admired had been in love several times and he thought there was "something wrong" with him, that he was "some kind of unloveable half-man." The respondent's closest friends were a married couple who symbolized to him "the way life is supposed to be lived":

> I was pretty romantic anyway, the type who's in love with love. That's probably hard for you to believe listening to me now, but I was. [This comment refers to the respondent's earlier description of his involvement in gay group sex.] Wedding bells were breaking up that old gang of mine and I wasn't going to be left out of the group. And I was jealous of [Bill] and [Janis'] marriage which made me determined to have one too. I wanted to be part of a couple, a long-term couple, a biological and emotional couple.

The respondent set himself a goal. By the end of the year, he aspired to be married like his friends, and he was.

Romanticism in sex play was also an important consideration. Typically, respondents' heterosexual behavior involved affection, kissing and heavy petting. By contrast, homosexual behavior at this time was sporadic, furtive, non-affectionate and genitally focused. Both these conditions made it difficult for respondents to read gay themes into homosexual attractions. Limited homosexual experience confirmed perceptions about the non-viability of gay life and romantic heterosexual experience clouded awareness of homosexual interest. Until further, more definitive evidence was forthcoming, respondents bracketed in consciousness questions addressing sexual orientation.

No questioning the inevitability of marriage. Some respondents report marrying because they never questioned the inevitability of marriage:

> [Why did you marry?] Oh Jesus, that's a big one. Let's just say in my family, no one ever thought not to. Marriage was assumed like breathing. You breathe, you marry. Period.
>
> I'm so jealous of gays today. You have options. In my day, I didn't even know there was an option. You don't know how lucky you are.
>
> I married in McCarthy's '50s when the closet was taken for granted. There wasn't anything else to do.
>
> It was wholesome and something simplistic about it. I thought marriage was what I was put on earth for. I followed the rules.

Some families instill in their children a unilinear life plan which offers no tolerance for variety. Weinberg (1973: 16) outlines this developmental sequence as "childhood, going to school, graduating, getting married, becoming a parent, making a sum of money, dying, leaving the money to your children, and finally being forgotten." Imagining a sequence different from the one instilled by socialization was not possible for many respondents. Questioning the inevitability of marriage is, theoretically, the first step to avoiding marriage, a step which respondents did not experience.

Social, financial and occupational motives. Respondents report being motivated to marry by the benefits they believe matrimony bestows -- public recognition, approval and respect. While these qualities are obtainable outside marriage, marriage perhaps provides them more assuredly and easier in our society than other methods. Commenting on social reasons for marriage, a respondent says:

> All the time I dated [Barbara], I had a boyfriend. I used to take her home after a date, then go to his house for sex. He was more fun for sex, but she was more fun social-wise. He wasn't dull, but we couldn't go anywhere together and dance and hold hands and neck. We had to sneak around and be secret. And I liked the feeling of being out and about, being seen having fun....No one ever said that my boyfriend and I were cute together, but people used to say [Barbara] and I looked like we stepped off the top of a wedding cake.

By themselves, such social reasons for marriage appear trivial, but along with other conditions, they are, according to respondents, compelling.

Financial security, status, and job prestige are other reasons given for entering matrimony:

> If you're going to make it in business, being gay isn't practical. And I was going to make it.

Respondents also mentioned the help wives could be in getting them through school and in achieving professional degrees. The men believed a wife was important for occupational advancement.

Meeting a woman wealthier than they sometimes provided the respondents a direct financial incentive to marry.

Although no one said money was a primary motive for matrimony, 68% say they wed women wealthier than themselves. It would be interesting to know if this violation of the "mating gradient" (Leslie 1967) is disproportionately more common among married homosexuals than married heterosexuals.[5]

Premarital pregnancy. Fifty-two per cent of the respondents had fiancees who were pregnant at the time of marriage. It may seen incongruous that gay men would have such a high rate of premarital impregnation. A possible reason for this was discussed earlier: In order to lessen fears of gayness and to "prove" their heterosexuality, the respondents were strongly motivated to perform coitus. Such heterosexual over-compensation increased their chances of early fatherhood.

> There were a lot of reasons I married, but I guess her pregnancy was the clincher. At the time it happened, I already felt guilty dating her for two years, taking up so much of her time when my soul wasn't in it. I didn't know how to break it off without a scene, but I knew I shouldn't lead her on either. She was getting antsy wanting to know one way or the other. Since I was the guy who deflowered her, that was the big deal too. While I was worrying whether to marry or drop her, it was decided for me -- she became pregnant. We married three weeks later.

Desire For children. Central to marrying motives is the desire for children. Respondents report wanting a sense of continuity that only progeny can offer (vicarious immortality). It is important for some to know their life will not end with them, that their children will continue their genes or even their personality. Fear of death is reduced by believing children carry on their parent's existence.

Children also fulfill desires for generativity -- an interest in establishing, nurturing, and guiding the next generation. Child care and teaching aspirations are more readily satisfied with the captive audience of one's own offspring.

Loneliness and companionship. Other than "love," the reason cited most often for marriage was fear of loneliness and desire for companionship. Respondents believed only a legal spouse could offer security in this regard. From what they knew of the gay world at the time, respondents believed homosexuality could not give them their desired freedom from loneliness.

> I was boarding on [Elm] Street then with a really nice Jewish couple and their little girl....I remember I'd go walking at night by myself and I could look into people's living rooms and see families grouped around the TV. My heart ached to have their sense of companionship. I wanted a nice home, and kids, and someone waiting for me at the door. Remember The Donna Reed Show? That's the way I wanted it. I wanted someone to walk with through life who cared for me and wouldn't leave me....A man who'd do that was an unthinkable fantasy. Marriage promised me my dream, so I jumped at it.

> She was away from her family and I was away from mine and we sorta clung to each other, but somehow I could not find love in my heart for her and I told her so. I admired and respected her and missed her when we were apart and I felt sorry for her and finally after on-again, off-again talk we agreed to marry.

> I don't remember how it happened exactly, but I know she hugged me and held my hand. This

> is hard to say and it sounds silly, I know, but if you were in my shoes at that time, you'd understand that I was the lonesomest person alive -- half alive. I thought she was doing me a great favor marrying me because I had such a bad opinion of myself....I had the misguided idea that marriage would solve my problems. She meant a lot. Human warmth was absolutely foreign to me. I had no one really who paid that kind of attention to me. I was starved for it and [Elaine], she was lonesome too, opened me up. I had nowhere to turn and she sensed I needed to be rescued and she just gave and gave and gave. Her hug put new life in me and I thought here is the kind of sensitive person who would understand.

The foregoing discussion makes clear that respondents denigrated the gay world and romanticized the heterosexual world. These powerful perceptions led respondents to see themselves as non-gay, and led them into heterosexual marriage. It is clear, however, that respondents did not enter marriage flippantly, but gave it considerable thought, often after painful, searching experiences. Given society's anti-gay prejudice and pro-marriage indoctrination discussed above, it is surprising that more homosexuals do not marry.

In the foregoing reasons relating why respondents married,[6] four social-psychological mechanisms operate to reconstruct an identity around the appropriateness to marry. These identity-altering mechanisms are:

1) Selective perception of the relative merits of one world to the other. Respondents focused on unpleasant gay experiences and on positive heterosexual ones. Pleasant gay experiences and negative heterosexual ones were not part of the perception.

2) Differential association resulting in physical and psychological isolation from conflicting world views. Respondents' significant others were heterosexuals who reinforced positive feelings about heterosexual life. Respondents were only marginally involved in homosexual life (genitally focused) so there was little gay input to challenge perceptions.

3) Verbalized accounts to neutralize behavior and disapproval of it. Six ways have been described whereby respondents discounted their gay behavior and avoided stigmatic gay identity.

4) Structuring participation and interaction in each of the worlds so as to confirm existing biases (see also, Veevers 1980). Respondents' gay involvement was limited to furtive, "superficial" non-emotional, "desperate," isolated, anonymous "quickies." By contrast, relationships in the heterosexual world were characterized by "warmth," "humor," "sharing."

These mechanisms help respondents structure and maintain a self-identity as non-gay. They help push down gay material, "freeze" it, or bracket it in consciousness. These mechanisms, however, are not totally successful in eliminating all gay feelings. Periodically, gay feelings poked through and tended to be quickly discharged by respondents in furtive, genitally-focused homosexual acts. These periodic intrusions of gay feelings into an otherwise heterosexual consciousness lead respondents to answer "Who do I feel I am?"

with "I'm possibly bisexual."

WHO DO I ANNOUNCE MYSELF TO BE?

Unlike Stage One, respondents in Stage Two no longer keep silent and hope people will assume they are heterosexual by default. In this stage, respondents announce themselves to be "heterosexual." In discussing this announcement, it is necessary to keep in mind the critical role of secrecy and passing discussed throughout the first part of this chapter.

"Passing" involves keeping a secret so that an individual is accepted as "just like everybody else" when in fact, if some aspect of the person's character were known, it would serve to set the individual apart from others (Goffman 1962: 2). For respondents in this study, passing entails the presentation of a straight front and secreting homosexual desires and behaviors. Passing involves conscious management of whom you announce yourself to be.

Lyman and Scott (1970: 78) state that passers develop a heightened awareness of ordinary events and every-day encounters. Quick evaluation and assimilation of marginal clues is required. Passers take note of not only their own dress, demeanor and camouflage, but that of others. In presenting a convincing front, they must be "alive" to the subtleties and nuances of communication, relationships, and speech. Conversations that are relatively matter-of-fact for conventional people become for the discreditable, elaborate exercises of impression management. Humphreys (1972: 63-77) calls passing behaviors "skills of the oppressed" and uses this as one reason to explain the over representation of minority people in the acting profession.

Passing strategies take considerable effort initially to manage, but over time people may learn to routinize them. For example, one respondent said his "passing" eventually became "like second nature." However, each new situation requires adaptation of passing skills to fit the unfamiliar context and the passer cannot afford to relax completely since manipulation of variables is still necessary. Even the most skilled passer becomes complacent at risk.

As said previously, the heterosexual announcement made by respondents in Stage Two is a form of passing. It may be executed by word, but mostly it is by deed. Primarily, there are two kinds of announcements that maintain the non gay image: 1) emphasizing other identities and, 2) engaging in heterosexual dating and coitus.

1) Emphasizing Other Identities. One way to manage uncomfortable feelings is to focus so much attention on another identity component that sexual identity pales in comparison or is smokescreened entirely. Respondents refer to this as putting "my best foot forward" and finding "my gimmick" although it is generally more inclusive than these phrases imply. The phrase from respondents that seems to

more accurately capture the phenomenon is finding "my niche." Some of the homosexual-deflecting identities that respondents remember emphasizing include "big man on campus," religious devotee, political agitator ("shit disturber"), beatnik and drug user identities.

This is not to say that all people who emphasize these identities are covering homosexuality; it is simply to say that some homosexuals find adoption of these identities particularly useful as part of a passing strategy. In fact, that these identities are not seen as homosexual makes them attractive to gay passers. These alternative identities cover homosexuality by emphasizing other features of the personality, help respondents gain acceptance in a non-gay group, and reduce feelings of alienation. Antonovsky (1960: 429) makes a similar point in his classic article, "Like everyone else, only more so: Identity, anxiety and the Jew": "[Some Jews] have sought their identity as radicals and/or intellectuals, not necessarily denying, but most often not confronting their Jewishness" (emphasis added).

The following quotations illustrate how respondents in this study used identities as "class-clown," "Mr. Joe Cool," and "All-American-Dream-Son" to deflect attention away from and to not confront their homosexual feelings.

> I was always musical and that was my door-opener It let me into the Shaw Society, and I was drum major. You have to do something; you know you're shitty at sports. You are the last chosen for teams and kids snicker; you know how cruel they can be....Practically all through high school I

> faked a terminal case of athlete's foot.... Being class clown worked too. The humor hid a lot of pain. But, you know, I could never laugh at myself at all. I remember one day, a Thursday, I started out to school wearing a green shirt[7] and I ran all the way home to change. I was that uptight that they would have any ammunition against me.

This respondent, and others, also indicated that they developed a repertoire of witty sarcasm ("smart putdowns") to deter challenges to their newly announced identities:

> They'd cross me at their peril. I'd been called a "kike" and nobody was going to get to me with "fag." One was enough.

An alternate identity that worked to help another respondent with his announcement was:

> My technique was buying respect. I used to steal money from my mother's tin can and use it for treats for my friends. This is weird; I just had a deja vu. I still can't believe I did that to my poor old mother. I gained a lot of attention giving presents, trying to impress with my 'Vette. Mr. Joe Cool, obnoxious. A few trophies I won in track didn't hurt either; I used those to the hilt. I learned very early to survive by playing the game, it's hardly anything to brag about.

Development of these passing strategies emphasized other identities so as to minimize respondents' homosexuality.

A latent function of one strategy was to push one respondent to the top, to become exceptional:

> I started high school a sissy and ended up president of the Student Council. I was determined to beat my homosexuality and feeling sorry for myself.

This respondent is now an executive making in excess of $100,000 per year, and he feels he hid his gayness behind a "shield of accomplishments" and developed a reputation as a "super achiever." This new identity also served to minimize his earlier identity as "sissy" and, as he says, to "butch it up" in his new identity. This is how the respondent sees himself developing this new identity:

> To show you how bad it was, in the first part of [school name] I was even too shy to go to the cafeteria because kids could see me and whisper about me, yes, so I used to take my lunch to the bathroom, lock myself in a cubicle and eat there. Yes, that's the only place I felt safe....Anyway, to make a long story short, I was caught eating in the can and sent to the principal and all that. Miss [Brown] took me under her wing and counselled me. There were no school counselors then. I'm sure the fact that my dad was on the school board explained part of her interest, but anyway, she just worked and worked with me and had me doing things and I just came out of my shell. Just shell, not closet. Within the year, she had me so that I won the regional spelling contest up in front of a whole auditorium of people.

With this start, the respondent "gave myself over to becoming the All-American-Dream-Son." He also became class valedictorian and paper editor. He comments: "I programmed myself away from thinking about my problem."

Reed (1972) refers to this as "the-best-little-boy-in-the-world syndrome." He says people with a stigma feel they have to "accomplish twice as much in order to be considered half as competent." As the above respondent said:

> I could never do enough to feel equal to the other boys. [Q] Yes, they did. Not knowing my gay feelings, they believed I was a success, but I knew differently and that tore me apart.

So painful were the earlier perceptions of feeling "different" and feeling "alienated" that it is not enough to be average.

The person must see and present himself as extraordinary in order to compensate for and to banish the original feelings (Reed 1972). Here it is clear that by emphasizing other identities, respondents were able to pass, to maintain a non-gay identity and, in effect, to announce themselves as heterosexual.

2) Engaging In Heterosexual Dating and Coitus. Dating women is an important way for men to establish heterosexual credentials. Consequently, dating served as a relatively effective passing technique for respondents to announce that they were heterosexual. Respondents' cross-sex relationships, however, were motivated by companionship needs more than by erotic desire:[8]

> Other guys were panting after girls and I couldn't get why they were such a big deal. I was confidant to some girls, but not exactly anyone's boyfriend. People thought I was a ladies man though because I hung around with a lot of girls, see. Girls have always been my best friends. They'd tell me their personals, but I don't think they thought I was sexy. I didn't think they were. I was their pal; we had the same interests.
>
> As I look back on it, it started as a facade, but eventually, I got into it. I was very sociable and danced like crazy, but dates were more like sisters. We kidded around and they didn't see me as a sexual threat at all, only very fun to be with. Romance just didn't happen.

Heterosexual dating was a major way for respondents to announce themselves as non-gay. Respondents who felt "different" in the first place perceived they were under pressure to be like the rest of their peers. To offset homosexual suspicions, they felt a need to prove their conventionality, to fit in.

Not all dating was in order to pass, however. Some of it was, as the above quotation illustrates, for friendship and recreation. Others report dating to test themselves to see if they were "really gay," or because they were genuinely curious about coitus: "There was so much talk, I had to check it out." (Heterosexual sex is not an uncommon experience of gay men. Bell and Weinberg, 1978, report almost two-thirds of the gay males they studied had experienced coitus.) Even respondents growing up in small towns and Bible Belt communities of the 1930s and 1940s, where premarital sex was severely condemned by the citizenry, recall peers exerting considerable counter pressure to experience coitus.[9]

> [At 17] I worked after school in a small grocery store and I got friendly with the cashier, [Nancy Gray] and she had huge tits, I remember. Huge [laughs and demonstrates]. She must have been older although I don't remember her being older, but she must have been because she was able to get booze. Whatever, one night after work we went out and got loaded. She was more loaded than I was and started coming on to me....It was high time I proved myself and this was as good a time as any. I don't think I was very good at it, but at least I did it. Considering the circumstances [on a blanket next to the car by a country road], I think I did pretty good. [I: How did you feel about it then?] Okay, but it wasn't nearly as exciting as other guys had cracked it up to be, or as good as the sex I'd had with [Steve]. [Did this tell you anything about yourself?] Uh huh, it told me I was a latent heterosexual and if I worked at it I'd soon be straight.

> I guess I had one, three, four sexual affairs with girls in high school and college, but I always

> nipped them in the bud. It was for everyone's good. When girls fall for me they get in too deep and it's hard to keep them at arm's length. It was flattering in a way, but also a bother and draining.
>
> [Q] I felt really good [after first coitus] not so much because it was hot, but because I'd finally achieved something I'd been taught I should achieve. I'd finally entered the mainstream. Maybe I was more normal than I thought.

The few respondents who avoided premarital sex employed the following strategies: isolating themselves from peer pressure by becoming studious and/or religious; associating with a "herd" of mixed-sex peers where no one dated another specifically, but were "friends with everyone;" lying about sex -- suggesting they were coitally experienced when they were not. The strategy of most respondents who did not have premarital coitus, however, was to date "decent girls" whom they knew were virginal and would place no sexual demands on them. They appealed to standards that said a gentleman should be courteous and treat women with respect.

It may seem incongruous that men who report such strong homosexual leanings are able to perform coitus. Respondents report two explanations, 1) "excess" sexual energy, and 2) homosexual fantasy during coitus.

First, respondents report high libidos so that fears of impotence during coitus were minimal:

> Back then I always had a 24-hour hard-on [laughs]. Seriously, I had to masturbate a couple times a day just to keep soft in class so I wouldn't embarrass myself. Getting it up for girls was no problem at all; I had lots left over for them. That was the least of my worries.

Whether this respondent is exaggerating is unknowable; the important item to note is that his lack of heterosexual interest was perceived not to lessen his coital capacity.

Second, respondents report that thoughts of men during coitus "beefed up" their heterosexual ability. Double dating provided a primary means to stimulate homosexual fantasies while performing heterosexually:

> I always made sure that my girlfriend and I went on double dates with good looking guys and their girls. The guy would make out with his girlfriend in the front seat and I'd screw my girlfriend in the back seat and get off listening to his sex sounds.

Variations on this practice during military service and college years were related by others. One popular activity was "threesomes." Two men, for example, might pool their money and share a prostitute. Respondents report that it was erotic to watch their friend have intercourse with the woman and then to have intercourse themselves with the same woman. The men did not have sex with each other, so it was not a homosexual act *per se*, although respondents report finding the symbolism of the act homoerotic and the other man's presence to be arousing. The woman's presence neutralized homosexual elements. The ostensibly heterosexual acts involved with these double dates and threesomes allowed the gay men to buttress their sense of heterosexuality while gratifying homosexual urges. Respondents could still announce themselves as non-gay.[10]

In announcing themselves as heterosexual, some respondents realize they are not telling the truth and also realize the considerable effort it takes to sustain such story-telling.

> The lies I told! Everyone, but my mother especially, so many lies I can't remember. Afterward I was tired because it took so much energy. [Q] I justified it because she was a snoop and it was none of her damn business. Anyway, I think she had strong suspicions or she wouldn't have asked me so much trying to trip me up, but I wouldn't give her the satisfaction of giving in. [Q] Well, sure. What happened was that I lost track of the line between truth and lies and I ended up fooling myself.

Like the method-acting technique, respondents create and sustain by their heterosexual announcment an "as if" world. They invent ways of seeing themselves and their relationships with others as convincingly heterosexual. By pretending as if they are heterosexual, they hope it will become reality. In the words of Berger and Luckmann (1966), respondents "socially construct" an alternative reality.

When these heterosexual self-constructions are challenged, respondents perceive the challenges as merely "quirks," unimportant "accidents," "they didn't really mean that." This finding suggests that there is a feedback loop between self-perceptions and self-announcements so that distinctions between the two become blurred. By the end of Stage Two, respondents may come to doubt their self-perceptions and believe they are genuinely heterosexual, so powerful is this feedback loop.[11] Perceptions of significant others similarly reinforce the heterosexual announcement, as the next section makes clear.

HOW DO OTHERS PERCEIVE ME?

In the symbolic interactionist framework, identity grows out of social interaction. Major theories of development (Piaget 1932; Erickson 1968) stress that people come to know who they are, in part, by internalizing the perceptions others have of them. Cooley expressed this idea clearly in his metaphor "the looking-glass self." Lindesmith et al. (1977: 322) maintain that identities "do not exist except in a symbolic or social environment from which they cannot be separated." Identity implies others and cannot be separated from them. According to Mead (1934: 164), "No hard and fast line can be drawn between ourselves and the selves of others, since our own selves exist only insofar as the selves of others exist."

In Stage Two, other person's perceptions are important insofar as they reinforce respondents' heterosexual behaviors. (Respondents do not report significant others supporting homosexual behaviors.) Respondents report that significant others perceived them mainly as heterosexual,[12] and respondents did what they could to foster this perception: "I wanted them to like me." Main reference group membership was heterosexual, and this membership typically increased alienation from homosexual selves and reinforced heterosexual identity. Religious organizations, peers, and extended family were the main reference groups cited as influencing this process. For example, as respondents moved from dating into courtship behavior, reputations were established among reference groups and significant others as "so and so's boyfriend" which further enhanced heterosexual identity.

Additional incidents led respondents to believe they were perceived as heterosexual: One respondent reports having a campus reputation as a "stud" so much so that the women's dormitory had a notice on the bulletin board warning women students to beware of the respondent since he would try to pressure them into intercourse on the first date. One respondent reports having two peers "kicked out of college" for making homosexual passes at him (see Morin and Garfinkle 1978). Another reports telling "fag jokes" which he believed helped him deny his homosexual feelings and encouraged others to see him as heterosexual:

> I cracked fag jokes and they'd do the same with me so they must have thought I was straight. I mean if they thought I was gay they wouldn't say those things to my face would they?

Respondents report, however, having few or no close friends, either gay or straight, at this period. They guess at how they were perceived by others. Among these guessed perceptions, the theme of alienation is strong. For example, respondents report thinking significant others saw them as "snobbish," "haughty," "condescending," and "aloof." At first glance, it may appear that these perceptions are totally unrelated to sexual orientation identity, but respondents explain the connection:

> I didn't let people close to me. Remember I'd have those bad [anti-gay] experiences.... [Q] Maybe [others saw me as] a little mysterious, strange, an enigma, okay. And that was fine with me. Anything was better than queer.
>
> I was alienated from the very people I wanted so much to accept me. I couldn't be honest with them so I kept a safe distance...I rejected them before they could reject me. [Q] I can only guess. I was accused of being standoffish, but I was just being cautious.

It is interesting that respondents recall significant others perceiving them as heterosexual in spite of many incidents that would indicate otherwise. As stated previously, respondents had been attacked by gay bashers, dishonorably discharged from the military for homosexuality, experienced considerable homosexual sex, been psychiatrically examined for homosexuality, had violent refusals to sexual advances, and so forth. Respondents tended, however, to view these as isolated events, compartmentalized, and out of view of the bulk of significant others. Even significant others who knew about the events were believed to have forgotten about them or to have dismissed them as irrelevant.

Denial may have been practiced by respondents at this time concerning significant others' perceptions. Subsequent to "coming out," respondents have been told by selected significant others that they had "strong suspicions" about their orientation prior to marriage. Respondents report,

5

however, that they were so intent on escaping stigma and "normalizing" themselves with adamant heterosexual announcements that they refused to see the contrary evidence and refused to believe that anyone else saw it either.

> I can tell you exactly how they saw me. I was talking to [Joe Doe], my old room-mate from [school] last month and we were reminiscing and he said he knew all along.... He remembered me as the most uptight person he ever saw. He said I was wound up tighter than a coil....He was big for horseplay and when he'd slap me or poke me, I'd jump a foot. I was always ticklish then. I wasn't comfortable with anything physical. He said I was "rigid," that's the word he used. I can believe it's true, but I don't remember it at all....
>
> I: Wait, I'm lost.
>
> R: Well, I was....
>
> I: Did his seeing you as rigid have anything to do with your gay feelings?
>
> R: Everything. I put on a straight jacket to keep them in.

In light of these data, it is important to note that perceptions of how others saw respondents while they were in Stage Two differs markedly from perceptions of how respondents think others saw them from the vantage point of further stages.

Perceptions From Other Homosexuals

Heterosexual friends constituted the bulk of significant others, making perceptions from other homosexuals relatively unimportant in influencing how respondents thought about themselves. Some respondents experienced a period of gay celibacy just prior to marriage,[13] repudiated their gay past, and thereby insulated themselves from the perceptions of gay others.

> [Other homosexuals] probably saw me as your typical confused closet case, but we never talked about it at all so I don't really know. I never got to know any very well. I steered away from them. I didn't want people to think I was one too. And they weren't about to say anything; they were in the same boat. They were busy denying their own urges too.
>
> R: [Homosexuals] used to come into the store [respondent worked part-time in a camera store] and I couldn't look them in the eye because I thought for sure they'd be able to tell about me. They make me so uncomfortable I got to dislike them. [Q] I was afraid, I was afraid of the feelings they aroused in me. They were threatening, arousing but threatening.
>
> I: How do you think they saw you?
>
> R: I don't think they did at all. I didn't want them to. I wanted to be invisible.

Perceptions of male sex partners and other homosexuals did not seem to be homosexually salient at this time for respondents' identities except as a negative reference group.

Fiancees' Perceptions

If respondents denied others' homosexual perceptions, there is evidence that at least one group of significant others -- fiancees -- denied homosexuality in respondents. Fiancees were important others who reinforced heterosexual identity in respondents. This is the case even when respondents disclosed to them their conflicted sexual feelings. For example, one respondent disclosed to his fiancee after coitus:

> I told her a little about what I'd done in the past. I didn't use any labels and I said it like it was all in the past. I guess it came out like, 'Tell me it isn't true,' because I remember she took me in her arms and said seductively, 'If I haven't got what it takes to hold you, then I deserve to lose you to a woman or a man.' Her exact words. And that was it; she forgot all about it.

Since the information was conveyed in a low-key, oblique manner -- downplayed as inconsequential -- and couched in a heterosexual context (post coitus), it is understandable that the homosexuality was denied.[14]

Another respondent tells of a situation with his fiancee which indicates how the perceptions may become confused:

> Of all people, I didn't think I had to tell [Cathy]. She was sophisticated and had been around gay people. Hell, we were in little theatre and she saw me with the other guys. I mean it should have been obvious....But she was in love with me and believed what she wanted to believe....There were a lot of mixed messages floating around too, and we were both too insecure to challenge each others' assumptions.

Respondents' perceptions of significant others' perceptions are colored by the passage of time. Respondents indicate, however, that the majority of significant others, both gay and straight, perceived them as heterosexual. This served to enhance heterosexual identity among respondents and moved them toward marriage.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has examined the marginal identities of gay familymen post puberty and prior to marriage. By the end of Stage Two, the relationship among the three components of the matrix is problematic. There is a disjunction to varying degrees among the matrix components. This manifests itself in unstable identities. Respondents oscillate between feeling bisexual and heterosexual. The oscillations of these notions about self (which can change rapidly) tend to correspond to whatever sex the respondent is currently having the most satisfaction with. (If the respondent is enjoying women more, he tends to focus on the heterosexual announcement and others' perceptions. If the respondent is enjoying men more, he tends to focus on the bisexual feeling.) These oscillations create a volatile identity and are responsible for considerable psychic discomfort.[15]

Respondents may become confused about their identity, however, by the feedback loop operating between self-announcement and others' perceptions on the one hand, and feelings about the self on the other hand. The feedback loop may operate to emphasize the heterosexual components and respondents may believe for a time that they are genuinely heterosexual. This is one way to explain respondents' assertions that at the time they married, they acted in "good faith," they did not lie, and they felt they were heterosexual.[16]

Data indicate that respondents answer the question, "Who do I announce myself to be?" with "heterosexual." By emphasizing other identities, respondents avoid public declarations about their homosexuality. Also, heterosexual dating and coitus aid respondents in announcing themselves as heterosexual.

The third part of the chapter answers, "How do significant others perceive me?" with "heterosexual." Respondents perceive significant others are major figures in promoting heterosexual identity and heterosexual marriage. Through detailing the answers to the three parts of the Strauss-Stone-Rainwater matrix, the important roles of secrecy and passing are described. The next chater, Identity Affiliation, addresses issues of identity development during respondents' marriages and transition to fatherhood.

NOTES

[1] Verbalized styles of stigma evasion (Goffman 1963) have been discussed under such headings as "vocabularies of motives," (Mills 1940), "techniques of neutralization," (Sykes and Matza 1957), "deviance disavowal," (Davis 1961), "accounts," (Scott and Lyman 1969), and "vocabularies of adjustment," (Cressey 1971). This research generally uses the term "accounts" since it is shorter and more inclusive than the other terms.

[2] These same negative perceptions of the gay world and reasons for marriage were echoed by sociologist Edward Sagarin (pseud. Donald Webster Cory) thirty years ago in his autobiographical introduction to his book, The Homosexual in America (1952: XV):

> Homosexual love, I told myself, is a myth. I would never find a man whom I could love. There would always be the short-lived affairs, and then each would go to new and unexplored fields. It appeared to me that I faced a life of dissipation, a hopeless dead-end. Where could I turn? At the age of twenty-five, after determining that I was capable of consummating a marriage, I was wedded to a girl whom I had known from childhood, a lovely and outgoing person, who brought deep understanding to our union and who shared many interests with me. I resolved that marriage would be the end of my sins, that I would sever my ties with the homosexual circles...and build what appeared to be the only life that might be fruitful for me. I was not long in learning that marriage did not reduce the urge for gratification with men... I needed my former companionships, but I would not allow myself to admit, even in the silence of the thought process, that I wanted them.

[3] Themes involved in accounting for marriage and gay identity avoidance are so integrated and interrelated that several may be expressed in a single sentence. Without hardly taking a breath, this respondent quickly recited parental pressure, compatible interests, youth, ignorance, and bravado as reasons for marriage. Rather than describing factors in a clear and orderly sequence, respondents often present a conglomeration of factors which need to be separated and analyzed. This is difficult, however, since in unstructurered interviews, as in everyday speech, the

flow of conversation is erratic. A plurality of themes are offered in random juxtaposition, in free association, rather than separate points made independently. It does not make sense for the interviewer to ask which of the many related reasons is the reason, or even the most important reason. The factors related to self-image, to personality, and to lifestyle are multifarious and complex. The precise analysis of exactly how important individual themes are for particular kinds of gay familymen awaits a different and much more structured kind of data collection and analysis. This said, interviews with respondents uncovered recurrent themes in accounting for marriage and gay identity avoidance and these themes, however imprecise, are related in this research (see also Veevers 1980: 16).

[4] Contrary to psychoanalytic theory that claims all male homosexuals are in "flight" from women because they fear "the vagina has teeth" (see Tripp 1975: 77-80), evidence from the present study supports Saghir and Robins (1973: 214) observation:

> The most frequently encountered emotional reaction following heterosexual involvement is that of indifference. It is not aversion, nor a conscious fear of heterosexuality, for most homosexual women and men find no emotional aversion and feel no trepidation in becoming involved heterosexually. The determining factor in the subsequent avoidance of heterosexual involvement is the lack of emotional gratification and true physical arousal with opposite-sex partners.

Harry and DeVall (1978: 5) assert that homosexual orientation is acquired "through positive motivations and rewarding erotic experiences with same-sex persons rather than being fear-based in origins."

[5] The "mating gradient" (Leslie 1967) refers to the social expectation that husbands be taller, heavier, older, better educated and wealthier than their wives. Gay familymen, however, tend to violate the mating gradient in these areas as well as others. For example, two-thirds of the gay familymen married women who were taller, heavier, older, better educated or wealthier than they, or women who had health/emotional problems, or women from racial and ethnic minorities (e.g. severe allergies, diabetes, physical disability, obesity, epilepsy, first generation immigrant). Speculatively, the low self-esteem and impaired marketability generated by these characteristics may make the women more content (consciously or unconsciously) to settle for a homosexual husband. Gay men may also pursue women with these characteristics since the men perceive such women to be more receptive and less demanding.

Several respondents commented that gay men are attracted to and marry women whose demeanor or appearance is tinged with masculinity or women who are "tweedy." Wives who were interviewed, however, believe that during the course of the marriage they made themselves "tweedy" in an attempt to be more attractive to their gay husbands. Whatever the direction of causation, more research needs to be done on homosexuals' wives. To date, the only scholarly study specifically in this area is a psychiatric investigation by Hatterer (1974).

[6] It was initially speculated that "adulthood" and "masculinity" would be reasons given by respondents for marriage. By some definitions, a boy becomes an adult when he marries. Husband status and "becoming a man" are closely linked in our culture. Linking these qualities makes marriage an important rite of passage in that it bestows on the individual a highly valued trait.

Similarly, masculinity in our society carries considerable symbolic baggage. For example, the meaning of fatherhood is more a mark of sexual identity than a fulfillment of emotional needs (Humphreys 1977: 747). Having a child, especially a son, is a way to prove one's manhood, and some assume the more children sired the more masculine the man. Marriage and fatherhood convey not only the valued traits of adulthood and masculinity, but also the traits of maturity, responsibility, stability, mental health, and morality (Veevers 1980: 4).

By contrast, never married or childless men may be perceived as immature, irresponsible, unstable, mentally unhealthy and immoral. Interestingly, all these traits are included in stereotypes of homosexuality. However, no respondent mentioned either adult status or masculinity as motives for marriage. Maybe these traits are "too obvious" to mention; maybe they are plausible only theoretically; maybe they are socially unacceptable responses or maybe they really are unimportant motives for gays marrying. Nevertheless, it is important to point out respondents' non motives for marriage, especially when they contradict popular assumptions.

[7] Some schools maintain a folk notion that wearing green on Thursdays indicates homosexuality.

[8] Concerning the first heterosexual coitus of homosexual men, Hatterer (1970: 137) says:

> Many confirmed homosexuals who are highly active sexually and totally uninhibited can often mechanically perform very effectively on their first impersonal heterosexual encounter -- that is, they are able to achieve orgastic satisfaction and

> **give** it to the woman. However, the emotional component...is absent, and the experience usually is highly masturbatory in nature.

Disregarding the sexist remark "give it to the woman", Hatterer's comment is supported by this study's interviewees. Oral sex, however, is largely missing from respondents' repertoires. One wife goes so far as to say, "A man's dislike of cunnilingus is the litmus test of homosexuality."

[9] One respondent's only premarital coitus was with his older sister, which he claimed "doesn't count."

[10] Lest these examples give the mistaken impression that respondents are "heterosexual gymnasts," it is important to point out that respondents' coital experience was limited. Seventy-six per cent (N=38) of the respondents had sex with only one or two women in their entire lives, yet during this period had sex with "twenty or more" men. Respondents report being attracted to a very few women and to a large number of men.

Not only was the quantity of relationships different between men and women, but so was the quality. Respondents report heterosexual sex to primarily satisfy affectional needs and homosexual sex to satisfy erotic needs.

Over thirty years ago, this observation was made (Cory 1951: 217, emphasis in original):

> Usually these men [homosexual husbands] have never had a sexual relationship with any woman except the one [they married], in contrast to the many and the short-lived affairs with men. On a rating scale, from the viewpoint of activities, they might be considered more or less completely bisexual; that is to say, they have about as much sex with many men as with one woman. But, from the viewpoint of desire, they are never aroused except by the one female, and they would have to be considered almost entirely at the homosexual side of the rating scale. Without going into the psychological conditions that make possible a response to one woman but to no other, let me emphasize that this is a frequent occurence....

[11] The feedback loops among self-perceptions, public announcements and others' perceptions are not a new theoretical discovery. At least two novelists have noted their existence years ago and the profound influence they

can exert. In Mother Night, Kurt Vonnegut writes: "We become what we pretend to be, so we must be very careful about what we pretend to be." In The Scarlet Letter, Nathaniel Hawthorne writes; "No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself, and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true."

[12] Ponse (1978: 58) refers to this phenomenon as "the heterosexual assumption," the politics of which are noteworthy. Persons favoring the assumption point to the benefits it bestows on persons with same-sex feelings. The assumption by society that such people are straight may be comforting to these individuals in that they do not have to confront stigma before they are ready to deal socially and intellectually with sexual issues. The heterosexual assumption also facilitates secrecy for homosexuals in straight settings and lubricates interaction for those not ready to discuss their difference. On the other hand, some people regard the heterosexual assumption as a de facto denial by society that alternatives in sexual identity and lifestyle exist. Christopher Isherwood (1976), for example, refers to the assumption as "annihilation by blandness."

[13] Respondents report long periods near the end of Stage Two where they have few or no homosexual contacts. A moritorium is placed on homosexual behavior. This is partly because homosexual partners become increasingly difficult to find. Former partners are apparently genuinely heterosexual and pass out of their homosexual stage and refuse further homosexual invitations. This lessening of homosexual behavior is also because respondents want to minimize guilt and reminders that they are homosexual:

> Every time I had [gay] sex, I said it was going to be the last time. I said, "I need it only once more and it will be out of my system for good and I'll be completely straight."

In reducing the frequency of homosexual contact, respondents eliminate a powerful source for self-attribution of homosexual identity. This allows the attributors of heterosexual identity to gain greater salience.

[14] One interviewed wife said that when her fiance broached the topic of homosexuality, she was "only twenty" and she had "no idea what it meant," that she had "never heard anyone talk about it before," and, in fact, she thought sex between men was "physically impossible." Consequently, she entered marriage with little more preparation than if her husband had told her nothing about his homosexuality at all.

Denial may be a factor as much for the woman as the man. This is the case in the movie, The Valley of the Dolls, where a female character says, "He's not a fag and I'm just the dame who can prove it."

15 Once the decision to marry is made, respondents act quickly. Seventy per cent of respondents report engagements of a month or less. Part of this rush may be attributed to pre-marital pregnancy, but respondents also report creating the rush hoping that if they become "caught up in a whirlwind of planning" their doubts will cease to trouble them. One respondent describes a rapid unfolding of events: He completed his final exams and graduated from school, obtained his first employment, moved across the continent and was married in a wedding ceremony with 600 guests all within a space of five weeks. With such a chain of events set in motion, the respondent says: "I didn't have time for second thoughts."

16 Although respondents say they married "in good faith" thinking they were now genuinely heterosexual, two cite experiences that are difficult to reconcile with such statements. For example, a respondent, one week before his marriage, went on a camping trip with a male friend during which time they had sex repeatedly. Another respondent says that at his wedding rehearsal party, he furtively had sex in a pantry with a male caterer.

Examples of this kind of behavior are also found in literature. Andre Gide in his journals (1951) says: "I was in anguish to discover that even on my honeymoon I was surrounded by such boys....[My wife] could not help but notice the boys who responded to my smiles, and how upset I was by handsome youngsters. She began to get headaches, which weren't helped by the boys I brought to our rooms."

CHAPTER SEVEN

STAGE THREE: IDENTITY AFFILIATION

> All that is left is to pretend. But to pretend to the end of one's life is the highest torment.
>
> --Peter Tchaikovsky
> Following his marriage to
> Nadia von Meck, 1877

INTRODUCTION

The first and second stages of identity development for gay familymen involve sensitization to "feeling different" and active ways of managing the feeling. The third stage, however, involves acknowledging that homosexuality is personally relevant at least for part of the personality. How respondents come to this realization and how they respond to it comprise the content of the Identity Affiliation stage which is discussed below.

Homosexual identity development is not a straight line progression. There may be breaks in the process. One hiatus experienced by respondents is the period immediately before and after marriage. Despite the two exceptions reported in Chapter Six, note sixteen, most respondents report the first year of marriage to be relatively free of homosexual feelings and behavior. This arrest in gay identity development is welcomed by respondents. Typically, gay impulses do not reappear until the birth of the first child. The following example is a composite of a typical scenario during this time.

Ken recalls the first year of marriage as "the best time" of his married life. He was not troubled during this period by homosexual thoughts. He was convinced that his "problem was licked." During his honeymoon, he and his wife, Joy, went to a remote resort in the Adirondacks. He reports that there was little to do at the isolated camp, and he and Joy spent time in "constant sex." Ken says, "It was still fresh and exciting; she was like a new toy." He reports, however, that at the end of the honeymoon he was "glad to get back to civilization and see other men instead."

Ken recalls the first year of marriage as "busy." He was completing military duty and becoming established in a career. Joy was pregnant from the beginning of the marriage so she spent her energies, not in paid employment, but in setting up their home and in preparing for the baby. The excitement of being pregnant seemed to bring the couple together, regardless of the inopportune timing creating "money problems." Ken remembers that news of her pregnancy, "knocked my boots off. The high school sissy was going to be a father! It did great things for my ego; I was on top of the world."

Marital sex was performed "almost every day" and was enjoyed by Ken. He feels Joy "never looked better" than when she was pregnant and he was "proud to be seen with her." He says, "I treated her like a princess; I was so grateful because she made me normal for the first time in my life."

Ken reports enjoying home-life and "being domestic." He liked shopping and decorating the home. He and Joy threw dinner parties to which they invited their friends. Their house became "the central gathering spot" for their clique. Ken remarks; "There was never a dull moment."

The last two weeks before the baby was born, Joy did not feel well and Ken and Joy did not have sex. This upset Ken. Joy went into the hospital early to have her labour monitored since she was having difficulty. This was the first time Ken and Joy were parted since their wedding. During this period, Ken bought a body building magazine and masturbated to the photos. He also reports he had "an overwhelming urge" to have a man and he did so in a public toilet: "I just did it and took off like a scared rabbit."

When Ken went to the hospital the next day to see Joy, he "couldn't look her in the eye because of the guilt." He speculates on the re-emergence of his gay feelings: "It was the first chance since we married that I had time to myself, the only time the house wasn't full of commotion. As soon as I had the space to think and get in touch with myself, the gay thing came back. It was shaky. I was straight as long as there were constant distractions. Maybe that's why sex [with Joy] was such a performance. I felt if I did it with enough vigor, I could scare away the gay thing."

Several factors combined to alter the quality of Ken's sexuality after fatherhood. First, Ken had witnessed Joy giving birth, a "bloody experience" that he found repugnant and was "unable ever again to see her as sexy." Also, the tearoom incident intruded on Ken's sexual fantasies even though he tried "to bury" it. It was both anxiety provoking and "exciting," mixed feelings that he "didn't know how to explain."

The baby brought increased parental and financial responsibilities, which Ken feels reduced the intimacy he had with Joy. At this time, Ken and Joy bought a new, larger house and moved to a wealthier area. The extra financial responsibility led to Ken's working harder and staying later at the office. Almost five months passed before Ken returned to the tearoom. Joy thought he was "working overtime." On this occasion, Ken received from his sex partner information about two local parks and a bus depot where he could find more of the same. The size of his gay world quadrupled. In this way, through a combination of planning and happenstance, Ken moved from a happily-married, heterosexually-active man to a troubled, covert, but homosexually-active familyman in less than a year and a half.

Four themes emerge from this material. First, respondents report initial satisfaction with coitus and with heterosexual married lifestyles in general. Thus respondents appear to have "proof" for their Stage Two feelings, "I am possibly bisexual on the way to becoming heterosexual."

Successful living as a married man convinces respondents that this transformation has occurred and that they are now heterosexual. Marriage, the heterosexual lifestyle, and their wife's pregnancy convince them that they have "arrived."[1]

Second, setting up a household and starting a family create enjoyable "commotion" for respondents that displaces both self- and spousal-examination and keeps gay feelings buried.[2] Third, birth of the first child is the catalyst for the re-emergence of homosexual feelings. Ironically, while parenthood enhances the masculine and heterosexual image of respondents, parenthood also introduced changes that weaken defenses which formerly held off gay feelings. These changes center around the child's financial and time demands and the resulting parental fatigue which tend to lessen the frequency of both socializing and coitus. (For a general discussion on the transition to parenthood, see, Rossi 1968. For an overview on the literature of "parenthood as crisis" see, Le Masters, 1977 and Leslie, 1979: 484-486.)[3]

Four, Stage Three is a stage marked by instability, volatility and ambivalence of identity. In a short time, respondents report moving from feeling they are bisexual, to heterosexual, to active participation in homosexuality. Post-marital circumstances introduce dramatic shifts in respondents' lives which influence their identity; the salience of homosexuality can no longer be denied.

The remainder of this chapter examines this process and the effects on identity development. The discussion is organized around the three questions of the SSR model: Who do I feel I am? Who do I announce myself to be? and How to others perceive me?

WHO DO I FEEL I AM?

During Stage Three, respondents alternate between two different answers to the question, "Who do I feel I am?" First, they answer the question by stressing their familyman and occupational identities. Second, they answer the question by saying they are homosexual, but emphasizing they are not like other gays.

In stressing familyman and occupational identities ("I am an executive with IBM." "I am Jane's husband and Jimmy's dad." "I am the breadwinner of the Doe family."), respondents implicitly announce themselves as heterosexual and underscore their ties to conventionality. Emphasis on the occupational announcement is exemplified in the workaholic role.[4] Submergence of self in this role deflects attention from troubling sexual feelings. Respondents skirt the painful issue of sexual orientation identity, avoid confronting it directly, and comfort themselves with "normality." Becoming "devoted," "attentive" husbands and fathers works to the same end. Respondents say, in effect, "There are more important things in life than gay sex. Real fulfillment is achieved in my occupation and family life."

Respondents' second answer to "Who do I feel I am?" is "I am homosexual, but different from other gays." This perception stems from respondents' tendency to both eroticize and exoticize the gay world. They tend to have an "approach-avoidance conflict" to what they see as a mysterious community ungoverned by the rules of everyday life. Respondents are both attracted and repelled by what they view as a world of perpetual, easy sex with no responsibility. Respondents see themselves as more "responsible," more "sensible," more "practical" than openly gay people. These perceptions psychologically distance respondents from the gay world and other homosexuals, and insulate them from full homosexual identity.

Admitting homosexuality, even this qualified version of it, is initially disturbing to respondents since it threatens their newly created lifestyle in which they have considerable emotional, financial, psychological and career investment. Various maneuvers are adopted by respondents to lessen this threat and to make the self-admission of homosexuality more palatable. For example, one respondent during the nine years of his marriage restricted his homosexual outlet exclusively to masturbation with male photographs. He was inhibited from direct homosexual expression by both inner constraints (guilt, religious beliefs) and by outer constraints (geographical inaccess to gay institutions, lack of gay information networks, demands of family and career).

These constraints contributed further to his self-perception as "different from other homosexuals."

There are other ways respondents express themselves homosexually during marriage while maintaining their self-image of "different from other homosexuals." For example, one man says his coping strategy was that he made his wife into an "honorary male." Apparently his wife had broad shoulders and mounting her from the back for coitus (coitus a tergo) facilitated gay male fantasies, which made coitus tolerable in lieu of actual homosexual contact and still allowed him to see himself as "different from other homosexuals."[5]

Respondents' interactions with openly gay men also serve to emphasize their separateness and difference from them. For example, one respondent says his ventures into the gay world involved only "hit-and-run sex," a term that conveys the sporadic, furtive nature of his homosexual contacts.[6] He says this allowed him to keep "one foot in each world" and distanced him from openly gay men.[7] One upwardly-mobile, professionally-employed respondent had gay sex exclusively with lower-class men ("rough trade," hitchhikers, street hustlers). He comments: "They were all poor trash and had nothing going for them. I knew I wasn't like them." (Structuring life in this way also facilitated the respondent's compartmentalization since, ordinarily, the two classes seldom mix.)

When respondents answer the question, "Who do I feel

I am?" with "I am homosexual, but different from other gays," they reiterate the theme of alienation common to previous stages. This alienation from gays is a major obstacle to inter-component congruence and the achievement of a valid identity. It is also important to point out that respondents are not only alientated from other homosexuals but also from heterosexuals with whom they ostensibly share a lifestyle. The next section discusses this aspect of gay familymen's identity development.

WHO DO I ANNOUNCE MYSELF TO BE?

In Stage Three, the nature of the identity announcement is heavily influenced by the compartmentalization which typifies this stage. Typically, respondents announce themselves to heterosexual audiences as heterosexual, but to their expanding gay audiences as bisexual. This is further complicated, as this chapter points out, when the compartmentalization breaks down and it becomes necessary for the gay familymen to announce themselves as bisexual to selected heterosexuals in order to explain away their homosexual exposure.

Heterosexual Announcement to Heterosexuals

The heterosexual announcement is made obliquely via the social clues of familyman status, rather than by a direct heterosexual declaration. Marriage engulfs the men in a heterosexual role, and wife, children and wedding ring are some of the public clues of this role. Respondents report considerable commitment to their wives and children, being dedicated fathers and being involved in child- and family-centered activities (at least during the early part of the marriage).[8] Significant others assume respondents are heterosexual by this ostensibly heterosexual lifestyle and since no announcement is made to the contrary. The heterosexual announcement is made primarily in family and employment contexts, contexts which consume the bulk of respondents' commitments. In comparing this section with the previous one ("who do I feel I am?"), it is clear that fatherhood influences respondent's self announcement as heterosexual more than it affects their self perceptions. Fatherhood is instrumental in respondents successfully announcing themselves as heterosexual, but fatherhood does little to alter homosexual urges.

As compartmentalization increases during the marriage, there is a tendency for respondents to move to one of two extreme postures in announcing their heterosexuality: 1) breastplate of righteousness (Humphreys 1975: 135), 2) eccentricity. Both of these are distractability operations.

1) Respondents may be so fervent in their familyman announcement that they present themselves as heterosexual to a fault. Humphreys (1975: 135) comments on this phenomenon, also found in his tearoom sample, and shows how it is functional to their life situation:

> In donning the breastplate of righteousness the covert deviant assumes a protective shield of superpropriety. His armor has a particularly shiny quality, a refulgence, which tends to blind the audience to certain of his practices. To others in his everyday world, he is not only normal but righteous -- an exemplar of good behavior and right thinking. However much the covert participant may be reacting to guilt in erecting this defensive barrier, he is also engaging in a performance that is part and parcel of his being....Motivated largely by his own awareness of the discreditable nature of his secret behavior, the covert deviant develops a presentation of self that is respectable to a fault. His whole life style becomes an incarnation of what is proper and orthodox. In manners and taste, religion and art, he strives to compensate for an otherwise low resistance to the shock of exposure.

2) In contrast, respondents may announce their heterosexuality in such an eccentric, "devil-may-care" style that they disarm suspicions equally well. Respondents may present themselves as "nudists," "swingers," or "free thinkers" of a sort. This announcement is typically one of "mixed messages," so respondents resemble, as one man states, "a crazy quilt of contradictions."

One respondent says his neighbors "couldn't make heads or tails out of all the coming and going around here; it was a tossed salad of everything." Rather than being condemnatory, the neighbors simply tolerated them with "the kind of gentle nod and wink you'd have for your daffy old aunt." Another, a lawyer, frequently gave insider-type, pro-gay talks to homosexual groups accompanied by his spouse whom he always introduced as his "loving wife," thereby confusing his audiences. He calls himself "a moving target." Both these respondents enjoy word games with questioners and with those who try to decipher their eccentric defenses. They also relish telling "war stories" of times when they bamboozled others with their announcements, times when they were almost caught in contradictions, but managed to gloss them over.

Cory (1951: 219) describes one variety of eccentric, mixed-message announcements:

> [Some] gay husbands bring their circle of [gay] friends -- save those who may be quite apparent to anyone -- to the home, and the two lives are intermingled in all respects, except for the gratification, when it does take place, is arranged for elsewhere. That one aspect of the group life is kept from the wife. Thus she becomes, unknowingly and unwittingly, a part of the group....In the circle she is often loved and finds many of the friends inspiring and charming, though she would be aghast if the entire scene were unveiled before her. Occasionally suspicion may becloud her mind -- the preponderance of bachelors, the strength of a special comradeship between two people, the momentary mannerism that can so easily betray -- but the entire thought runs counter to preconceived notions of taboo.

Gay innuendo is mixed with heterosexual lifestyle in such an unusual, confusing way that can only be seen by others as eccentric.

Announcing themselves as off-beat protects respondents' homosexuality by confounding condemnatory provincial judgments with exotic mysteries. It insulates respondents from standard expectations and places respondents outside the criteria for evaluation in conventional terms. The role of the eccentric smokescreens respondent's whereabouts from both heterosexuals and gays.

Absorbing themselves in a bustle of eccentric activities not only shields respondents from the public identifying their homosexuality, but also serves to confound and obscure family boundaries and identify boundaries so that respondents do not have to confront their own homosexual feelings or behaviors. A respondent re-interpreted these activities as "running away from myself."

Playing the eccentric role also makes respondents unusual in some way other than sexual orientation. Sexual orientation is thereby trivialized for both respondents and their audiences by the over-riding power of the eccentric role. Tripp (1975: 134) comments: "[Some passers] may be eccentric about whom the mention of anything entirely personal seems out of place and his homosexuality perhaps the least of his peculiarities," the least bizarre part of his life. In short, the eccentric role acts as a cover. In this way there is a similarity between both postures adopted by gay familymen for announcing themselves as heterosexual. Both the breastplate of righteousness and eccentricity are disarming in being distractability operations.[9]

Bisexual Announcement to Homosexuals

The bisexual announcement is made to homosexuals primarily in social/sexual contexts, seldom in domestic or occupational worlds. ("Bisexual" is possibly the incorrect word for two respondents who told others they were "just experimenting" and "an explorer." Specifically, one respondent told others he was "only going up and down the sexual yo-yo," and the other said when anyone asked he explained himself by telling them he was "confused.") Initially, the bisexual announcement is made only to selected, male sexual partners. It is as specific as respondents can be in explaining their behavior without having to admit they are homosexual.

There is a serendipitous component in learning to self appropriate the bisexual label. In Stage Two it was mentioned that respondents felt they were "possibly bisexual," but they were not comfortable enough with it to announce it. By Stage Three, however, they are. Respondents gradually "drift" into the self designation; they have a chance meeting with someone who tells them about bisexuality or they stumble across favorable literary presentations of it.

> My first sex with a man [after marriage] was with a drag queen. Hooker. Colored. Isn't that awful? It makes me sick to think of it. At some level, I knew she was really a guy, but I didn't want to let myself believe what I was doing. It was her who first told me I was bi. I wanted to hit her I was so mad.

Another respondent remembers initially learning to self appropriate the bisexual label through "a [film] series at the museum":

> First I tossed it off, but obviously it planted a seed because by the end of the series, I didn't think it was so bad. You know, they presented it like there wasn't anything wrong with it, but it took a little while before I let myself buy it.

Respondents also report learning about bisexual announcements from books and magazines. Jim Kepner,[10] President of the National Gay Archives, Los Angeles, says that many homosexually-oriented publications prior to 1969 and the beginning of the modern Gay Liberation Movement centered on bisexual themes, rather than exclusively homosexual themes. A respondent tells how he discovered this material and its effect in encouraging him to adopt a bisexual announcement: The respondent moved with his wife to a new apartment where the mail, including bisexual magazines, kept arriving for the former tenant. The respondent surreptitiously masturbated to this material, and from the published stories gradually came to see the bisexual announcement as acceptable.

Other conditions of Stage Three favor self appropriation and announcement of bisexuality: Acquiring visible heterosexual accoutrements (marriage and fatherhood), make the bisexual label more palatable. Additional considerations that contribute to justifying the bisexual announcement include: love of wife, ability to perform coitus, ability to successfully pass as heterosexual, male-male sexual fantasies, and homosexual behavior. Respondents feel in Stage Three that this unusual combination of factors justifies self announcement as bisexual.

Effects of Bisexual Announcement on Identity

Being able to discuss homosexual aspects of their behavior marks a crucial turning point for respondents. In the first two stages, discussion about homosexual behavior is kept to a minimum. Prevailing proprieties and individual inhibitions tend to impede conversation of homosexuality even between respondents and their homosexual partners. Ordinarily, there is little opportunity or occasion to discuss the issue, and fear of offending or hurting further inhibits its introduction.

In Stage Three, the public announcement of the subject changes the situation appreciably. The "unspeakable" becomes discussable and its "shock" decreases. Taboo gives way to toleration as respondents discover they can broach bisexuality with gay partners, discussing the homosexual part of themselves, and gain information in conversation. Respondents find that discussion heightens the reality of the phenomenon and gives it increased legitimacy. The identity of the participants and rationalizations of the practice become more "respectable."

> We were in the Lion's Club and we got put together in this contest to quit smoking. I never liked him at first; he seemed square, kind of prudish, but here we were, "the buddy system" they called it, and I was -- we were -- to phone each other whenever we had an urge to smoke and get support....It somehow brought us close. About the third night we got to talking about our problems and dropping pins and it [bisexuality] came out....It was the

> first time I ever admitted to another person.... He seemed cool about it which was a nice surprise, but I stopped on the way home and bought a pack and went back puffing away, I couldn't help it.

Through announcement and discussion, the "strange" is brought into the realm of the familiar since it can be addressed within the familiar value system and thought patterns of the discussants. Discussion of bisexuality, even if it is condemnatory, heightens credibility and feasibility of homosexual identity, and moves the topic closer to legitimation and acceptability. Once respondents can announce themselves as "bisexual," they are more likely to incorporate homosexual behavior into their lives rather than resist it, as they do in previous stages.

HOW DO OTHERS PERCEIVE ME?

In Stage Three, just as there are two main announcements of self, there are two main perceptions by significant others: 1) Respondents believe that heterosexual audiences tend to perceive them as eccentrically heterosexual. 2) Respondents believe that homosexual audiences tend to perceive them as "closet cases."

1) Given respondents' extreme postures in announcing themselves as heterosexual, it is not surprising that some perceive them as heterosexuals who are eccentric. This perception is fostered by those respondents who run an experimental farm at the edge of town, keep a high profile in several political/religious action causes, center life

around collecting rare and strange objects, participate in alternative consciousness therapies (yoga, primal scream), play the role of the absent-minded professor consumed in esoteric research, operate expensive boutiques that cater to odd tasts in clothes, foods, and mystical ideologies. One respondent believes others perceived him as "asexual," as "too absorbed in my work to be anything sexually."

To be perceived as "eccentric" rather than a "weird misfit," for example, requires considerable social, verbal and personality skills and membership in relatively tolerant groups, usually the upper classes. Private idiosyncrasies are more likely to be tolerated as long as they are orchestrated with aplomb and discretion and there is no public scandal.[11]

Regardless of one's success in this regard, significant others' perceptions are tinged with negativism. Respondents believe others feel as alienated from them as respondents feel alienated from others.

Respondents' families also tend to see them as eccentric and to feel alienated. For example, one respondent found that the only way he could masturbate to gay erotica was to lock himself in the bathroom. Family members, irked about his monopolization of the bathroom, made jokes to him about eccentric bowel habits and nicknamed him "The Throne King." Similarly, another respondent found that the only way he could arrange cruising time was by squeezing it into his existing grocery-buying routine. Family members, irked about his tardiness, made jokes about his eccentric schedule and nicknamed him, "The Hong Kong Shopper." These examples make it clear that heterosexual others view respondents as heterosexual, but as eccentric.

2) Respondents believe that homosexual audiences do not subscribe to their bisexual announcement, but rather view them as "closet cases" engaged in denial.

> I always wondered if [gay friends] could see through it and, sure enough, my worst fears -- they knew for years....It takes one to know one.

One respondent who thought he was being discreet in cruising the city park by driving around its perimeter (rather than entering the park), discovered that "all of them [i.e., gays] knew about me" and that gays even had a joke among themselves that his car could only make right turns. This underscores that respondents are not only alienated from heterosexuals but that they are also separated from homosexuals. Respondents report such a situation to be lonely and stressful.

> The married [gay] man is a part of no world at all, precisely because he partakes of two disparate ones. Living in two societies that commingle without intermingling, he seeks to belong to both and therefore falls short of full integration in either. Wherever he turns, he is a minority -- not only in the world at large, but even in his small world of escape. The married homosexuals I have known.... regret most of all the mask, the fact that it cannot be discarded even with the one with whom the burdens of life are being shared (Cory 1951: 220-221).

How this situation is resolved is discussed in the next section, "When Worlds Collide."

When Worlds Collide

Over time, it becomes increasingly difficult for respondents to live with the discrepancies between who they feel they are, who they announce themselves to be, and how they are perceived by significant others. The intercomponent incongruency in the SSR matrix during Stage Three makes for highly unstable, volatile identities, and substantial psychic pain.[12] Although some respondents are able to routinize compartmentalization, others find sustaining the necessary maneuvers for secrecy to be excessively problematic.

Considerable energy is expended in the pursuit. Cover stories are manufactured for wives, co-workers and friends. Fake identities, names, and employment are constructed to prevent identification by sexual partners who might leak the information. Some respondents maintain secret post office boxes and separate office telephones for clandestine, gay-related business. Some keep hidden gay magazines; others have address book codes so gay activities can be secretly recorded and have separate apartments reserved for gay use.

Domestic conflicts are common with wives who object to the disproportionate time the men spend away from home, neglecting parental responsibilities. The men express guilt that their work and sex schedules do not allow them to spend as much time with their children as they would like. One respondent called his children "the consolation prize" in what he saw as an otherwise unsatisfactory lifestyle. Conspiracies of silence and denial within the families become strained if not transparent.[13]

In fourteen cases, the precipitating incident for the family's discovery was the husband's establishment of a love relationship with another man. Other facade-shattering incidents involved transferring body lice and veneral disease from a hustler to the wife, and being blackmailed. In one case a respondent came out to his wife in the course of marital counseling. In seven cases the precipitating incident was the husband's arrest by vice officers. In such cases, the respondent did not so much come out of the closet as have the closet involuntarily ripped from around him. Such unanticipated exposure is devastating.[14] The following example has an emotional quality not easily reproduced on paper:[15]

> R: They let me go on my own recognizance and the first thing I did was drive to my parents.... My ego was down to zero and my nerves were about to give out and I sat mom and dad down and told them exactly what happened. I guess I didn't know what they'd say, but I had to tell them. We hadn't been especially close because of a fight over my brother, money actually, the year before and -- mom -- well, it still wasn't patched up. And it was the hottest day of summer and humid and I was cold, shaking. My hands wouldn't stop -- from the handcuffs and also because things that had been bottled up inside me for so long weren't being hidden very well anymore. I should tell you my parents were in their seventies and just honest, working people. "Simple" you might say, but in the good sense of the word, you know. And I just laid it out that I was, ah, ah, charged -- in a restroom, y'know, all the grubby details. And they were so good. I mean supportive. It was beyond my dreams. God, we held each other and cried and sobbed and it meant so much to me. It meant they loved me

> [respondent begins crying]. It...it was an incredibly deep, emotional thing for me. They were there for me. I never knew they cared so much and that we felt so strongly. Years of all that pain and fights we'd had just, just dissolved [respondent talks while crying and is almost inaudible]. I was transported I was so happy, I...I....
>
> I: Wow.
>
> R: That's right. It was wonderful; I can't ever forget it. They loved me, they really and truly did [respondent regaining composure]. I'm sorry, I apologize. I didn't mean....
>
> I: No, you're doing fine.
>
> R: Do you know what I'm saying? Some shit like this [washroom entrapment] brings up together. Jesus, this world is fucked.

Wives as well as respondents are surprised by the exposure. (Some respondents are surprised that their wives are surprised since respondents thought their wives already knew, and tacitly accepted it. This underscores the point that there are various levels of "knowing.") Initially wives may react with disbelief and revulsion. This may give way to a feeling of couple solidarity, that "we can conquer the problem together." When this is the adaptation, respondents do not come out of the closet so much as take their wives into the closet with them.

Wives who had previously blamed themselves for lackluster marriages, for their husband's irritability, for his late nights, for his workaholic conduct, and for his hyperactive busyness now have an explanation of heretofore incomprehensible behavior. Wives may reinterpret the past in light of the new information, feeling their husbands cannot now be trusted and doubting that they ever loved them. One wife was so angry upon discovering her husband's homosexuality that she "clawed the drapes." Other wives exhibited a variety of psychological and psychosomatic reactions (hearing loss, ulcers, suicide attempts).[16]

Violation of the expectation of monogamy itself creates anger. Wives report feeling "betrayed." The fact that the extramarital sex is homosexual, rather than heterosexual, exacerbates the upset. As one wife said: "If it had been another woman, I'd know how to deal with it, but what do you do when it's a guy?" Another said: "It's not my fault I can't compete because I haven't the right plumbing."

Wives typically feel the gay announcement reflects negatively on them ("rubbed my nose in it"). The wife, in guilt-by-association logic, may be viewed as inadequate, immoral or even homosexual herself. (For a discussion of the concept of "stigma contamination," see Miller 1978, 1980. Birenbaum, 1970, also discusses the phenomenon, but uses families of the mentally ill as an example, and uses the terminology "courtesy stigma.")

Couples try a variety of techniques to shore up the marriages. Respondents may seek therapy to "cure" their homosexuality.[17] Some men generously offer wives the freedom to experience extramarital affairs too, although it appears this is done mostly to relieve respondents' guilt since they know that wives are unlikely to take them up on the offer. When wives do not put the offer to the test, respondents further console their guilt by interpreting this as evidence that the wives are "frigid" or low in "sex drive," although data from the wives dispute this sexual characterization.

Some couples try instituting new sexual arrangements: a _menage a trois_ (husband-wife-husband's gay friend), or the husband is allowed out one night a week with gay friends. In the former interaction, wives tend to report feeling "used" and, in the latter, men tend to report feeling they are "on a long leash."

Sexual conflicts spill into other domestic areas. Tardiness or missed appointments lead to wives' suspicions and accusations and general marital discord. One man calls this compromise period "white-knuckle heterosexuality."[18] Edmund White, in his autobiographical book _Travels in Gay America_, interviews a gay familyman who appears to be experiencing the strains of "white-knuckle heterosexuality":

> I've always been gay. I like to suck cock... [but] I don't want to be gay....I like the straight life. I'm used to it. I like playing bridge with other couples too. But I'm afraid things are falling apart with my wife. She's slim, she's a good dancer, she knows how to draw people out, she's an ideal companion. But sex with her....For years she thought I was just undersexed. Now she knows I'm gay; I told her. We read _The Homosexual Matrix_ out loud to each other. We went to a marriage counselor for two months (he was a real fool). My wife wants me not to jack off or go to the baths; she thinks that will make me so horny I'll want sex with her. But it won't. I wish she had a lover (White 1980: 165).

By negotiating groundrules that reinstate partial denial and by intellectualizing the situation, some couples maintain for years the compromise period. This uneasy truce period ends if groundrules are repeatedly violated and when the wife realizes, 1) that her husband finds men sexier than herself, 2) that he is unalterably gay, and 3) that her primary place as object of permanent affection is challenged. Wives may gradually come to resent romanceless marriages with men who would rather make love to another man; and the homosexual husbands come to resent, as one man said, being "stifled in a nuptial closet."

Divorce becomes increasingly likely as the men's gay relationships intensify and they begin to reconstruct the social reality of the gay world as favorable.[19] Gradually interpreting heterosexual marriage as unfulfilling, these men come to see gay culture as providing viable lifestyles for effecting companionship and social stability. It is usually wives, however, who take action to terminate the marriages by locking their husbands out of the house or by having them served with divorce papers. Painful as this experience is, it tends to decrease the men's guilt from at least part of the responsibility of marital dissolution. It also brings the relief of "closure" (Lemert 1967).

It would be difficult to exaggerate the upset expressed by respondents surrounding their divorces. Words used to describe spouse and self at this time include: callous, infuriating, hateful, and humiliated, angry, and cheated. Fantasies of murdering the spouse are reported and others recall day dreaming about severe illnesses or accidents happening to their spouses:

> In the middle of the day, stories would come into my head about [her] getting hit by a truck or the brakes going out on her and I'd feel tremendous relief thinking about her dead.

One man tells of carrying his wife home after a party at which she became drunk and passed out. He then pushed her over the edge of the patio deck in their backyard and left her there all night hoping she would be dead in the morning. He recounts his disappointment, guilt, and anger when he woke up to find her bruised, but alive. Respondents recall the period from disclosure to divorce as highly stressful and unhappy.

Respondents Who Remain Married After Disclosure

Couples who remain married after disclosure tend not to have rejected divorce, but rather have an indefinite postponement of it: "after the children have left home," "after the finances are in order," "when things settle down at work." Often these times never seem to arrive. In a different context, Cuber and Harroff (1965: 102-103) describe similar adjustments:

> They say that they "still love" or "sort of love" or "think they love" the grown-away-from spouse....There are those who frankly say that they love their spouses more than anyone else, but not enough to limit their companionship and sex behavior in accordance therewith....[Love] has become synonymous with pity for some, simple acceptance of responsibility for others, the need to repay a debt for still others....And so they continue, not rocking the boat now but holding to the dream that someday they may. And perhaps some

> day, faced with an "engaging alternative" they will, but in the absence of one, it is clear that they will continue in the not-too-uncomfortable routine.

Since there are only three respondents in the present sample who remain married after disclosure, it may be instructive to describe their lifestyles.

Larry is a librarian for a parochial school. He is well-organized and meticulous in his work and self presentation. He gives the impression of being low-key, even shy, but he describes sexual adventures which suggest he is not reserved in all aspects of his life. Larry has an extensive library at home which consists entirely of homosexual material, largely erotica. It fills his two car garage and the master bedroom which he shares with his wife. For two years, Larry has been in the process of building a wing on the modest house to contain spill-over from the library, but his spare time and spare money are scarce, so the project moves slowly keeping his house in disarray. Larry has purchased a second-hand van which he has upholstered in men's worn denim jeans given him by former sex partners. Larry cruises the streets with his van and picks up men, mostly black, and has sex with them in the back of his van. Larry's wife is a part-time seamstress working out of the house. This suits her well because she has a physical disability which limits her mobility. Among her many projects, she helped Larry upholster his van. Last summer, Larry and his wife went on a trip down the coast in the van visiting relatives and also gay bars along the way. The wife claims she "liked most of them" and enjoyed those ones especially where the patrons "fussed over me." She and Larry had "only one fight" during the trip. It seems Larry left her "stranded for hours" in a bar while he had sex with a patron in his van in the parking lot. Larry says their marriage is "not good, but whose is these days," and he plans to "stick it out."

The second respondent who intends to remain married is Tom. He has been wed for more than twenty-five years and is in his mid-forties. He and his wife have seven children, two daughters and five sons, one of whom is "retarded." All are grown and have left home except for the retarded son. Tom feels guilty about this son since he believes that his transferring venereal disease from a male prostitute to his wife during her pregnancy caused the retardation. Tom has been arrested six times for propositioning vice officers; he has been terminated from "more than ten" jobs for "bothering" other employees. He has been robbed and assaulted by hitchhikers and others he has solicited for sex. In one instance he was assaulted in the car outside his daughter's wedding for propositioning the best man. Tom regularly gives shelter to homeless youths for a few days at a time in exchange for sex. When this happens, his wife leaves the house and spends the time at her relatives' residences. The wife does not terminate the marriage for a variety of reasons: she is a devout Roman Catholic and has no occupational skills, not even a driver's license. She does not have the resources to care for the retarded son by herself, and she has also recently developed psychiatric problems (depression, alcoholism) which undermine her confidence and make her dependent on her husband. Tom acknowledges that he has had sex "a few times" with the retarded son as part of his "sex education." The sex involved Tom masturbating the son when Tom tucked him in at night. The wife does not know about this and Tom has stopped doing it because the son would "cry" afterwards. Looked at from the outside, it might seem that these families are leading lives of quiet desperation, but both of the gay familymen say they intend to remain married.

The third and final respondent who remains married after disclosure is Whitney. He lives in a large, rambling house with his wife and one child. The house is filled with fine, original art and sculpture. From time to time, the house also contains a live-in housekeeper (there have been five in the last year), visiting performers in local theatre productions, a seventeen-year-old god-daughter who comes to stay whenever her boyfriends expel her, six dogs, and two cages of gerbals. Periodically, a local chamber music group practices in the house.

Whitney is an intellectual and artistic aesthete. He is the director for a major choir in the city and a patron of the arts. His dress is conservative except for the inclusion of bright scarves and heavy jewelry. He has had several years of psychotherapy and displays insight regarding his situation. He describes himself as a "glad-hander" who has "scads of acquaintences, but no friends." He says his jovial demeanor is calculated to keep people at a distance. He says that he cannot relate to gay men, that he feels "intimidated" in approaching and conversing with them. He feels that his marginal position between the gay and straight worlds makes him vulnerable to be rejected by both. He minimizes this possibility by distancing himself from gays and straights, yet keeps up appearances of intimacy with back-slapping and raucous talk with everyone.

Whitney says he and his wife "lead parallel lives," that they "stay out of each other's way." Whitney is a member of a gay motorcycle group and has hosted two bike runs on his estate. His sexual practices include having his anus penetrated by his homosexual partner's hand ("fisting"). The second time I interviewed him, his wife was on a trip overseas with a relative and Whitney was preparing a "fister's party" in his living room.

In this last example, economics are a major force in cementing the marriage. White (1980: 165) gives a similar example from his research that corroborates this economic assertion:

> My favorite professor in college lived with his wife and children, his wife's admirers, his own leather boys and assorted strays in a great house on top of a hill -- but this menage was built on the wife's wanting a complex, fascinating husband and on the husband's

> tireless energy in inventing and sustaining new forms for love. It also depended on her considerable wealth.

Another variety of gay/straight marriage that tends to stay together over time via economics is the "uptown marriage." A respondent tells White:

> I knew many men who were married and gay.... It's called an "uptown marriage." You live with your wife and children uptown and you keep a boy in the Quarter....It's a very New Orleans story (1980: 240).

Whatever strategy the respondents select to maintain their marriages, the unions are further stabilized by the inability to answer two questions: first, am I certain that an exclusively gay lifestyle is what I want; and, second, is it what I will always want? Answering such questions with the limited gay knowledge available to largely covert respondents is especially problematic.

From the small sample in the present study, it is impossible to generalize about respondents who remain married after disclosure. The life arrangements of the above three men, however, appear unusual. These arrangements are in marked contrast to the somber lifestyles of men who move to the next stage, Identity Acceptance.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

During Stage Three, respondents come to acknowledge that homosexuality is relevant for at least part of their personality and explore ways to incorporate it, rather than eliminate it, into their lives. Respondents admit to themselves that they are gay, but different from other homosexuals. They feel their familyman and occupational identities set them apart from other gays. Respondents tend to announce themselves as heterosexual (albeit eccentric) to straight audiences and as bisexual to homosexual audiences. These announcements tend to alienate both gay and straight audiences who perceive respondents as "closet cases" and as "eccentric heterosexuals." The latter part of the chapter discusses respondents' disclosure to family and the adjustments of divorce and remaining married. By the end of Stage Three, respondents have acknowledged their homosexuality and have begun to affiliate with the gay community.

NOTES

[1] Alan Bell, co-author of the Kinsey Institute's Sexual Preference (1981) makes the important distinction between changing sexual behavior and changing sexual orientation. He believes the former is easy to change, but that changing the latter is problematic.

> It's very easy to change a person's sexual behavior -- even to change sexual response to a given stimulus. But even after you've done that, you haven't touched sexual orientation. I think there are [homosexuals] who are trying to change their behaviors, and in some cases can be successful. But very often, I'm sure such people have pretty empty lives when it comes to the kind of things I'm talking about. They're missing elan vitale in their relationships, although they may be acting as they view it, responsibly as parents, husbands, or whatever. But very often I think they do violation to their integrity (Bell quoted in Prunty, 1981: 5).

Ross (1982: 25-29) in his study, "The effects of heterosexual marriage on homosexual desire," comes to similar conclusions. He finds that although marriage increases the heterosexual behavior of homosexual respondents, marriage does little to modify homosexual desire. During marriage, homosexual desire decreased for only five per cent of respondents. Homosexual desire increased for 25 per cent of respondents and homosexual desire remained unchanged for 70 per cent of respondents. Ross concludes that in marriage, homosexuals find "there is not a modification, but something more akin to a multiplication of homosexuality, despite the fact that getting rid of homosexuality was often the most important reason for and pressure towards marriage" (1982: 29). Ross further asserts:

> In the marriage, increase in the importance of homosexuality was usually against the wishes of the husband and a function of the presence of a homosexual orientation rather than of marriage strains. This tends to lend weight to the suggestions that homosexuality may be unmodifiable, and that marriage in order to de-emphasize a homosexual orientation is ineffective (1982: 29).

For a contrasting view, see, Masters and Johnson, 1979. Data from the present study lend more support to the findings of Bell (Prunty 1981: 5) and Ross (1982) than to the findings of Masters and Johnson (1979).

[2] Some respondents also may be inhibited from homosexual expression by either impaired perception (i.e., they do not recognize homosexual clues) or by defensive psychological blocking (they are so disturbed by gay thoughts that they repress them). For example, one respondent recalled that during the early years of his marriage he and his wife lived in Greenwich Village of New York City. He claims he "was so into marriage" that he did not recognize that Greenwich Village had numerous homosexuals until years later after he moved away and came out as gay. All the time he lived there, he does not recall ever consciously seeing another homosexual although there are incidents he interprets in retrospect as "heavy cruising," but at the same time "they went right over my head." Whether this reflects impaired perception or defensive blocking is not known, but it does illustrate respondents' learning experience in coming to express themselves homosexually.

[3] Leslie (1979: 485), in reviewing literature on the impact of the first child on marriage, refers to it as a "trauma." He concludes, however, that "all investigators agree that the trauma involved in early parenthood is successfully resolved by most couples within a few years." The re-emergence of homosexual feelings for respondents during this period possibly exacerbates the parental crisis for them and makes solutions more problematic.

[4] The workaholic role, respondents claim, allows them to avoid time with the spouse, to have alibis for secret cruising forays, to gain family sympathy for apparent sacrifice to over-work, and to emphasize occupational identity so that it smokescreens or blocks awareness of sexual orientation identity. Moreover, the workaholic role, unlike the homosexual role, is accorded a degree of social respectability, giving respondents both self- and community esteem. In these ways the workaholic role is highly functional for covert gay familymen.

[5] A variation of homosexual fantasy within heterosexual marriage is related by Andre Gide in his journals (1949-1951):

> We went to a cafe to see [Miriam] dance, and on the platform beside her was her younger brother playing the castanets....My friend whispered to me as a joke: "He excites me as much as she does." With me it was no joke. Later when I made love to Miriam, I imagined her young brother in my arms.

Respondents report that after their initial fascination with coitus wore off, they manufactured excuses to have marital sex as infrequently as possible. For example, some report staying up late watching television until their wives fell asleep, staying away on overnight business trips and conventions, calling late from a friend's house and saying that they were too drunk or tired to drive home. These examples underscore the point that homosexual husband's marital sex lives are problematic.

[6] Just as some teenage girls adopt technical definitions of virginity (Reiss 1967) so that they can have sex and still maintain their self-image as "respectable girls," so too married homosexuals adopt technical definitions of homosexuality so they can have male-male sex and still maintain their self-image as "respectable familymen." Four of these technical definitions are: 1) If two men have sex together and one is non-orgasmic, the non-orgasmic man is not really homosexual; 2) in male-male sex only the initiator is homosexual; 3) only the man who is the insertee is homosexual; 4) if a married man has sex with another married man, this is not a homosexual act. These accounts help respondents believe they are faithful husbands who are not homosexual.

[7] Respondents may distance themselves from other homosexuals by saying that, unlike overt gays, their homosexuality is only a "minor aspect" of their life which they refuse to let "outweigh more important things." This may be true initially in the marriage, but as the marriage progresses, respondents find that gay masturbatory fantasies no longer give the sexual satisfaction they once did, there is a longing for male-male physical contact, and as the gay sexual repertoire expands, the "minor aspect" account breaks down. Respondents report spending time, effort, and anxiety in rearranging schedules to accommodate gay sex, searching for willing men, spending money on cars and fuel to cruise, constructing intricate stories to fool work associates and family, and buying wives penance gifts. They also experience near misses with police and gay bashers. These facts erode the credibility of the "minor aspect" account and gradually lead respondents to acknowledge the increasing salience of their homosexuality, and to admit that they may not be so different from other homosexuals after all, regarding the intensity of their same-sex feelings.

Author, husband, and father, Somerset Maugham, in a biography (1972) comments on how he tried to emphasize his heterosexual component and portray his homosexual part as "only incidental: "My greatest mistake was this: I tried to persuade myself that I was three quarters normal and that only one quarter of me was queer -- whereas really it was the other way around."

8 During the latter part of the marriage when homosexual activity crowds out fathering duties, respondents compensate by buying their children "penance gifts" in what may be called "Santa Claus behavior." They shower their children with expensive items also to counteract feelings that they have done a terrible thing to their family by being homosexual: "It's the least I can do for having ruined their chance to grow up in a normal home." Using credit cards to manage guilt has many of these men in serious debt. (Santa Claus behavior is reported as a common guilt-reducing mechanism for other stigmatized fathers. See, for example, Jackson, 1954, on alcoholic fathers.) Guilt is also responsible for many divorced respondents giving ex-wives excessive alimony settlements and child support payments.

Oscar Wilde, in his memoirs, candidly admits that his homosexual activities resulted in neglect of his parental and spousal responsibilities and increased family conflict:

> I was telling my two sons stories last night of little boys who were naughty and made their mother cry, and what dreadful things would happen to them unless they became better; and what do you think one of them answered? He asked me what punishment could be reserved for naughty papas, who did not come home til the early morning, and made their mother cry far more (Wilde 1952; 152).

9 The inherent tension and drama in compartmentalizing gay and straight lives within heterosexual marriage has made it a popular subject for literature, movies, and poetry: Giovanni's Room, Butley, Advise and Consent, The Sargent, That Certain Summer, and more recently, Making Love.

Oscar Wilde, author and gay familyman comments cynically on the compartmentalization in The Picture of Dorian Grey: "The one charm of marriage is that it makes a life of deception absolutely necessary."

Hector Arce is more serious in his discussion of The Secret Life of Tyrone Power (1979: 285): "In vainly attempting to compartmentalize his professional, family, and secret lives, Tyrone Power tore himself apart instead."

Likewise, Paul Goodman (1977: 229-230) in Collected Poems expresses a similar sentiment:

> His truck he drives in day and night....
> I ought,...because I love him a lot,
> to bring him home and let him alone
> but I'd never be content with that,
> and my wife won't care for that....
> O God, there must be some way
> that he and I (and many another)
> can be a little happier.

While it is possible that the pain in these literary accounts is exaggerated for dramatic effect, respondents tended to describe their personal pain in compartmentalizing their worlds with even more dramatic prose and while discussing it exhibited emotional reactions ranging from nervous agitation to tears.

[10] Personal communication with Jim Kepner, President of the National Gay Archives, Los Angeles, April 1982.

[11] Proper public images have crashed for a number of prominent men, husbands and fathers, who have been arrested for homosexual sex in public washrooms: Edwin Walker, a moral crusader and American General; Harold Carswell, President Nixon's nominee to the Supreme Court; Dr. Gaylord Parkinson, President Nixon's first campaign manager; Jon Hinson, a conservative member of the United States Congress. Possibly the most famous example is that of Walter Jenkins, father of six and adviser to President Johnson. Shortly after personally issuing a directive to purge homosexuals from the State Department, Jenkins was arrested in a tearoom near the White House and forced to resign in disgrace (Miller 1982: 39-40). An identity crisis of major proportions can be expected when the feedback loop between self announcement and others' perceptions reveals statuses so dramatically incongruent.

[12] Crowley's, The Boys in the Band, has a scene that explains some of the difficulty in coming out to one's wife:

> Hank: I left my wife and family for Larry.... Some men do it for another woman.
>
> Alan: Well, I could understand that. That's normal.
>
> Hank: It just doesn't always work out that way, Alan. No matter how you might want it to. And God knows, nobody ever wanted it more than I did. I really and truly felt that I was in love with my wife when I married her. It wasn't altogether my trying to prove something to myself. I did love her and she loved me. But there was always that something there....I don't know when it was that I started admitting it to myself. For so long I either labeled it something else or denied it completely....And then there came a time when I just couldn't lie to myself any more (Crowley, 1968: 80, emphasis in original).

[13] Neill, Marshall and Yale (1978) present an interesting study that suggests complicated family dynamics play an important role in whether or not homosexuality is confronted

in families. The authors investigated the husbands of 12 obese women who had intestinal bypass surgery. To the authors' surprise, they found that three of the 12 husbands (25 per cent) became openly homosexual after their wives' weight loss. The dynamics of the situation may be this: a man chooses a wife who is obese. Such a woman probably has low self esteem, feels unattractive, and is probably less inclined to question infrequent marital sex. After weight loss, the woman's self esteem improves and she becomes more sexually assertive, and the man is forced to confront his disinterest in coitus and his homosexuality. There may be many marriages where the marital dynamics mask the husband's homosexuality until some major disequilibrium forces the sexual orientation to the surface. The present research suggests that, besides weight loss, three other factors that may force the homosexuality to be confronted include residential relocation, involvement in swinging, and the wife securing independent employment and income.

[14] The shock of discovery is chronicled in this melodramatic, front-page report from a black newspaper cited in Humphreys (1968: 75):

> The heavens forbid and the firmament displayed its romantic unveiling as Mrs. Rider was aroused from her slumber at 4 a.m. She did hear a noise in the basement. She investigated and surely enough she did see with her own eyes her husband and a young man lying absolutely nude on the basement floor.
>
> -- St. Louis Evening Whirl
> January 9, 1968

[15] Likewise, Sandler's Making Love graphically shows the emotions surrounding the coming out announcement (1981: 71-74, emphasis in original):

> Claire: Well...welcome home. Where have you been, Zack? I've really been worried....
>
> Zack: I don't know how to say it. I've gone over it and rehearsed it and I don't know how to say it. It's going to shake you up, Claire, but I've...I've made a few discoveries about myself. I've had... I guess what you'd call..."desires"...that I've been repressing...that are starting to surface. I uh... I find that I'm...I'm attracted to other men. I suppose I have been all my life but I never knew what it was, or at least I never admitted it. Or allowed it to come through. I don't know how, or why, or where these feelings come from but the fact is I have them, and I've got to stop denying it.... Do you understand...at all?

> Claire: No, I don't. What did I do, Zack? Is it me? Did *I* do something wrong? What are you saying? Are you telling me it's over...that our marriage has been a lie?
>
> Zack: Don't you see, I want to be your lover but I don't know how...it's not right for me....I'm telling you I can't fake it in bed anymore. It's not fair to either of us.
>
> Claire: I can't believe it...I'm dreaming...where have I been? It's all been a dream....We've had nothing....My God, I thought I knew you....What was I trying to talk myself in to....I don't know you.... Who are you?
>
> Zack: I'm the man who's loved you for eight years.
>
> Claire: Loved me?! Or loved using me?!
>
> Zack: Don't Claire. Please. Just listen. I want you to understand.
>
> Claire: Understand?! Understand what?! That I was an escape?! A safety valve?! Something to hide behind?!
>
> Zack: No -- I want you to understand --
>
> Claire: I don't want to hear this....*Stop it*!

[16] Even though respondents in this research were not asked specifically about suicidal ruminations regarding homosexuality, approximately two-thirds mentioned it in describing their life situation. Typically, the precipitating incident concerned coming out to families, employers, or police. Rofes (1983: 22) describes several cases of gay familymen's suicides in his book, *I Thought People Like That Killed Themselves: Lesbians, Gay Men and Suicide*.

> The Los Angeles *Herald Express* of June 30, 1951, reported the death of psychiatrist Dr. William Peake in a story headlined, "Accused Physician Ends Life: Beach Psychiatrist in Morals Case Takes Sleep Pills." Dr. Peake had been arrested on four charges involving sexual activities with teenage boys. At the time of his arrest, he told the officers, in the words of the newspaper, that "he had had unnatural tendencies since early boyhood" and that he was aware that "a cure of homosexuality is not possible." After writing a farewell note to his wife and daughter, Peake went to a hotel room and took 100 sleeping pills.
>
> Often these cases bear a great deal of similarity to one another. The Los Angeles *Times* of April 18,

> 1953, reported "Skin Specialist in Morals Case Takes Own Life." Dr. Kenneth McLarand, age 47, was arrested by the L.A. police and pleaded guilty to the morals charges. He was set free on bail, returned home, and wrote a note to his wife saying, "I'm tired of it all." He then took an overdose of sleeping pills.

Lest one think that suicide upon exposure is only a product of the "unliberated" 1950s and that such events have not happened recently, see The Body Politic (1975: 6). The paper describes a husband and father who upon being arrested in an Ottawa gay bath raid and having his name reported by the media committed suicide by throwing himself out his apartment window. Speculatively, closeted familymen may be more prone to suicide upon exposure than other closeted homosexuals since the former have had shattered a relatively more intricate denial facade, and consequently, are likely to feel greater anomie (see Durkheim, 1951).

[17] One respondent, commenting on mental health advise, says: "[My wife] asked me to find a psychiatrist and cure myself. I told her that was like asking a whale to find the shore and beach itself." Similar resistance to psychiatry (and other compromises) is noted in Sandler's Making Love (1981: 92):

> Claire: We'll get help. You'll see a psychiatrist. There's a lot around who can treat....
>
> Zack: It's not a virus. I'm not going to change.
>
> Claire: Then we'll live with it. I'm sure there are other marriages....
>
> Zack: No, Claire. I won't let us compromise. It's not fair. You're entitled to a satisfying sex life. And it's not fair....
>
> Claire: And what if I said it didn't matter.
>
> Zack: Now you say it. What about in a year when all that devotion becomes hostility. We can't let that happen...and it's not fair to me either. Don't you see, I can't live two lives anymore, one foot here, one foot there... I want to start accepting who I am. Let go. For both of us.

[18] The period of "white-knuckle heterosexuality" is difficult for the wife too, as revealed in the 17 interviews we conducted with them (Miller 1978, 1980). Other than Hatterer

(1974), there is scant research that has solicited wives' views on marriage to homosexuals. Tripp (1975: 238) comments: "How interesting it is -- and how alarming -- that the risks and comforts of the spouse are never mentioned; the massive literature...contains not a word [sic] on her behalf."

We have been able to find several scholarly sources that mention wives. None offers definitive proof of our claim concerning wives' difficulties, but they do support it. For example, Dr. George Weinberg says in Society and the Healthy Homosexual (1972: 53), "I have met a hundred women whose lives were seriously altered for the worse by their marrying homosexual men."

British historian, A. L. Rowse comments in Homosexuals in History (1975: 138):

> In 1877 came the tragic episode of Tchaikovsky's marriage....Tchaikovsky had been seduced...by the wish to regularize himself and to appear like ordinary folk. He wanted "to cure" himself and also to stop gossip....Marriage drove him to attempted suicide...[but] it was the woman who ultimately died in a lunatic asylum.

Charles Silverstein, a clinical psychologist, recounts the reaction of one of his female clients on hearing that her husband is gay:

> Then Burke came out to his wife. At first she felt hurt by the news. Then she got angry. For years she had blamed herself for her poor marriage, when all along things had been going on behind her back. She felt cheated of the opportunity to find a man who would give her the love and support she wanted in her life. She was angry because it had taken twenty-seven years of marriage before she learned the truth. She demanded a divorce, and Henry did not contest it. He was sorry that this had happened, but he knew that it was better for both of them. At least now she could make a new life for herself as well. (1977: 147).

The topic of homosexuals' spouses, though riven with research lacunae, is an essential consideration if gay familymen are to be fully understood. Gays' wives are also an important topic in their own right.

[19] All respondents in the present research who separated from their wives obtained divorces; none of the wives sought annulments because of homosexuality. Literature on annulment, however, indicates that homosexuality is a widely accepted ground for annulment. See, for example, Giles 1962; Ritty 1963; Anonymous 1965.

CHAPTER EIGHT

STAGE FOUR: IDENTITY ACCEPTANCE

> When I was fifty-one, I was hospitalized with a heart attack. All my life I'd played by the rules doing proper and expected things, but this woke me up. I decided then that I didn't want to die in the closet without ever having loved another man. As soon as I got well, I gradually eased away from my marriage and came out gay.
>
> --Letter from a Gay Familyman

INTRODUCTION

This chapter details Stage Four of gay familymen's identity development: Identity Acceptance. Since respondents are no longer living with wives, their familyman status continues through involvement with their children. This and other developments are discussed below, as is the impact they have on the respondents' identity development.

Erikson (1963: 22) sees identity as residing "in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture." This raises an obvious question. What happens to those who lack a communal culture? The answer Erikson seems to suggest is that identity formation for such people is exacerbated and protracted. While he admits that identity formation is a difficult, life-long task for everyone, it is rendered especially problematic for people lacking a supportive cultural milieu. Consequently, the histories of ethnic minorities, women, and gays reflect the struggle of securing a cultural context in which to assuage problems of self-worth and identity.

In the transition to Stage Four, respondents' main reference group shifts from the nuclear family to the gay subculture, a shift which represents an attempt to connect with the "communal culture" and to soothe identity difficulties. Cohen (1955) and Cloward and Ohlin (1960), writing during the same period as Erikson, state that, as one moves further into a subculture, one develops a stronger identity with the category of people in it, and such identities become more stable. Consequently, homosexuals involved in the gay world are likely to have clearer, more stable self-conceptions as homosexuals than those who do not become similarly involved. In addressing matrix components, this stage shows how various cultural and subcultural aspects of homosexuality nourish and shape identity formation.

In Stage Four, respondents accept rather than tolerate their homosexuality. This is often due to the influence of experiencing one or more reciprocal homosexual love relationships in the homosexual culture. The concerns and tasks that characterize this stage center on relating to others in the gay community.

As Schwartz and Long Laws state (1977: 61):

> Individuals must find some responsive community with which to share the formation of identity or suffer continual doubts and fluctuations in self-definition (emphasis in original).

Such subcultural involvement not only normalizes homosexuality for participants, but also validates it as an identity and as an integral part of their lives. This point becomes clearer as the three parts of the matrix are discussed below.[1]

WHO DO I FEEL I AM ?

Acculturation into the gay world is highly problematic for respondents. The adjustments they face cluster around three problem areas: 1) disadvantages of late arrival on the scene; 2) the necessity of learning new social definitions and skills; 3) the need to reconcile prior fantasies to the realities of the gay world.

Respondents who experienced difficulty in the transition expressed fears that their age or appearance might disqualify them from gay life. As one man noted:

> I was in my mid-forties when I left the family -- overweight and showing my age. I had nightmare visions of being the old troll at the far end of the bar....Was I going to be a failure in both worlds?

The fear that he and others expressed was that they might be double failures, lacking the capacity to succeed in either the world of heterosexual family life or the gay world. One respondent referred to this specter as being "a man without a country."

Persons who perceive themselves as deficient in attractiveness or sociability commonly find it difficult to emerge from marriages and re-enter the dating-mating marketplace. These problems apply to heterosexual widows (Lopata 1978) and divorcees (Hunt and Hunt 1975; Weiss 1978) as well as to gay familymen.

Respondents characteristically met this challenge by a number of strategies. Most note a weight loss and improvement in physical fitness following divorce. This led some respondents to the discarding of old clothes and the purchase of new attire that conformed with fashions encountered in gay institutions. Friends and work associates often commented on how "stylish" respondents had become.

Those who emerged from marriage after the mid-1970's, when gymnasiums and health clubs became central institutions of the gay world, turned to weight lifting and other exercise programs to improve their physical appearance and well-being. One respondent said he was "greatly encouraged" by meeting so many other gay fathers at his gym. In addition to the new-found attention to weight and musculature, respondents turned to new hair styles and switched to contact lenses. The concern with appearance and the accompanying rise in self-esteem was summarized by one man in this portion of an interview:

> [When I was with wife] I looked in the mirror only to shave, comb my hair, and tie my tie. Now I even carry one in my glove compartment. I know that sounds vain -- but everyone says I look a lot better than when I was married. You have to look at yourself more to look better.

Along with marked changes in appearance, Stage Four demands the cultivation of new skills in self-presentation. Not only is divorce apt to result in alienation from old friends and neighbors, but acculturation demands the acquisition of new social and sexual support networks. Methods of meeting, greeting, entertaining, and maintaining friendships differ from one cultural entity to another.

In the gay world, for example, one established way of friendship formation is to meet another man in the relatively anonymous milieu of a bar, bath, or cruising area, to engage in a sexual encounter with him, and only later to follow up with conversation or a date in order to become better acquainted. This model is almost the reverse of standard approaches in heterosexual society.

Finding new friends in the gay world, therefore, may require knowledge and experience in an elaborate set of cruising skills. One popular manual for gay men (Giteck 1983) outlines 12 "basic principles" of cruising.[2] Familiarity with a variety of sexual techniques can be helpful in furthering gay relationships once contact has been made. Although some of these dating-mating skills are variations on basic methods learned in the heterosexual world, others require techniques of interaction unique to the gay world.

A respondent in his mid-thirties recalls his first experience in a gay bathhouse:

> Anyone watching me would have known I was a real greenhorn and scared to death. I didn't know what to do with the key; I

> didn't know what to do with the towel;
> I didn't know what to do with the grease....
> I thought the orgy room was the next thing to the Black Hole of Calcutta. I kept trying to talk to people and they'd look at me like I was nuts.

One way to acquire needed skills, in the gay world as in other cultures, is to read about the folkways of the new group. As the gay familymen moved into new residences and away from the observation of wives, children, and heterosexual neighbors, they began to accumulate gay newspapers, magazines, and books. Those who had not previously read extensively in anticipation of their new lifestyle began to read voraciously on the topic of homosexuality in Stage Four.

One respondent tells of walking into a gay bookstore and charging $500 worth of materials, all of which he read in two weeks. One might say that respondents developed a "more gay than thou" attitude, trying to compensate for past ignorance of the gay world.

In the first year of their post-marital lives, gay familymen report joining gay religious congregations, social clubs, and consciousness raising groups. They tended to immerse themselves into the gay world with an intensity or eagerness that parallels the enthusiasm with which religious converts embrace their new-found faith.

After moving from his home in a "bedroom" suburb into the West Hollywood gay community, one man reports:

> The first three months after I moved out, I threw myself into a whirlwind of activity.

> There was some meeting or rap group every night of the week. I was like a hungry child in a candy shop. I wanted to go to bed with half the men I met. Considering I wasn't very selective, I did pretty well, too....

At this point in the interview, the respondent retrieved a "sex diary" from a desk drawer and proceeded to enumerate 34 different sexual partners he had recorded during that three-month period.

Just under half the gay familymen interviewed report a relatively promiscuous phase of "everynight fever" that lasted from three months to four years after separation from their families. This expanded social and sexual activity was generally interpreted by them as "making up for lost time."

With such increased social and sexual activity, combined with immersion in the literature and support groups of the gay world, respondents' marginality decreases rapidly. Such expansion of knowledge and contact with the gay world, however, often results in a third obstacle to be overcome, along with the problems of late arrival and the need to develop new social skills. At this stage, a high proportion of the men report a dissonance between the newly encountered "realities" of the gay world and the fantasies that had enticed and sustained them during the marital conflict and disruption of Stage Three.

While living relatively covert and compartmentalized lives with their wives and children, the gay familymen tended to view with envy the lives of "unfettered" men in the gay community. Gay bars, baths, and discos, which they had seen only on rare and furtive pilgrimages, were viewed as temples of sexual and social celebration. They yearned for the camaraderie and sociability, the apparent freedom and sexual conquest, they saw exhibited there. Men with their arms around each other were interpreted as being lovers in the fullest romantic sense. In short, respondents idealized the gay world.

Now, in Stage Four, they confront the human realities experienced by participants in any social arena. Those in the dating-mating marketplaces of the gay world soon learn that social and sexual success demands persistence, preparation, and a high tolerance of rejection. As a respondent commented:

> I went through a period of real bitterness. My dream was turning into a nightmare. If one more man rejected me, I thought I'd scream. I didn't know other guys were just as scared and insecure as I was. They just seemed cold and aloof. Here were all those hunks I was hot for -- and they might as well have been wearing signs: "Do Not Touch." I began to understand why so many [personal] ads [in the gay newspapers] began with, "Tired of the bars and baths...."

One respondent who left his family for a gay lover was abandoned by the lover eight months later. The respondent was so upset by this that he required a period of psychiatric hospitalization.

With the collapse of idealized fantasy, several other respondents report becoming depressed in Stage Four, and not a few gave serious consideration to retreating back into the more familiar and socially approved life of husband and father. This reaction explains the second marriages of two respondents.[3]

For most, however, Stage Four is a period of progressive, if sometimes awkward, acculturation into the gay world. They report an expansion of knowledge about gay life and the gradual mastering of gay skills. New friendships and love relationships provide welcome support for this period of adjustment. They see themselves as truly _gay_ -- not only in the sexual sense, as in previous stages, but as socially and culturally gay.

WHO DO I ANNOUNCE MYSELF TO BE?

Once respondents live apart from marriages, the degree of compartmentalization decreases. Homosexual identity becomes more completely integrated into everyday life. During Stage Four, however, respondents still make two separate announcements: They present themselves as heterosexual to employers and to children. To all others, however, respondents tend to announce themselves as gay.

Secrecy tends to persist with employers, since some employers are hostile to homosexually-identified employees and since respondents believe the legal system does not protect their interests should they be dismissed for being gay. (Research into these areas by Gould, 1979, and Levine, 1981, confirm that these fears are, for the most part, justified.)[4] Segmentation between work and social life is difficult for respondents employed in fields where there is an expectation of blending the two and where advancement may hinge on how well this expectation is performed. In this regard, one respondent says:

> I'm straight only with the people at work. They're nice, but socializing with them is a hassle 'cause when they visit I have to hetero-proof my apartment. I used to worry I'd bump into them in the [gay] bars. Now I figure, if they're there, we're both probably trying to keep the same secret from our boss.

Economic downward mobility is a characteristic of respondents in this stage, but it is unknown if this is due to the social-occupational segregation or to other factors such as the added financial burden of maintaining two households via spousal support and child support. This latter explanation is backed by studies of divorced heterosexuals (Bohannon 1965; Yankelovich, Skelly and White 1975) that also find financial downward mobility.

The Spartan existence reported by a dozen of the respondents during Stage Four may be related not only to economic necessity but to what Adam (1978: 100) discusses as "guilt-expiation rituals." In this post-marital stage, some respondents with substantial means move into efficiency apartments with little more than a few pieces of essential furniture and the clothes on their backs. Although most divorced respondents report that "my wife got everything" in the property settlement, interviews with the wives reveal that the gay familymen asked to keep surprisingly few of their common possessions. One woman appeared confused by the generosity of her former husband:

> I couldn't believe it. He just packed up a couple of suitcases and took off. The first time I dropped the children off at his place, I couldn't believe my eyes. I mean he was all but sleeping on the floor. It really upset me, made me feel guilty. There I was with all the silver and crystal and antiques, and he was eating on paper plates. I offered him all sorts of things to make his apartment more livable, but he said he only wanted one table and a couple of bridge chairs. One Saturday, I just packed up a bunch of things -- china, some linen, pots and pans -- and drove them over in the [station] wagon.

Many gay familymen spoke of the months following separation as a time of "purging." They expressed a perceived need to "strip down" or "streamline" their lives. Although they tended to view their past lives as "unnecessarily cluttered," the themes of "cleansing" and "purgation" were unavoidable in respondents' accounts of this transitional stage. An attorney remarked:

> It made me feel kind of holy to be living in such austerity. I felt like a monk in a cell. Of course I was reading Playgirl instead of the Bible, but I still felt pure and, I guess you'd say, disciplined.

The desire to purge their lives of old lifestyle patterns -- combined with the financial exigencies of divorce, alimony, and child support -- results in austerity for most gay familymen in Stage Four. The lack of suitable furnishings and living space in their new quarters often precludes their having children stay with them for long periods of time; however, they report placing a high value on visits with their children.

Not only are respondents fearful of the possible consequences if employers and fellow workers discover their gayness, but they also fear rejection from their children. There is thus little openness about respondents' homosexuality with their children. Typically, the fathers announce themselves only to older children, if at all, and their sexual orientation is not considered a topic for general conversation.

Respondents' fear of exposure generally centers on the ex-wife. As the "offended party" in most of the divorces considered here, she may use knowledge of her former husband's sexual orientation against him. Respondents may avoid discussing homosexuality with offspring out of concern that their children might tell the unknowing mother.

By withholding knowledge of their gayness from wives, the respondents avoid being denied visiting rights, at least so far. Moreover, fear of subsequent exposure and loss of contact with children through a new court order remains a restraint upon the fathers' openness. One respondent states why he remained covert even after marital dissolution:

> I told my ex-wife's best friend that I was exhausted from nights out in the singles bars. In the first place, I did have circles under my eyes from so many nights in the gay baths -- and our friend had commented that I was looking tired. But I also wanted to get the word back to [Jane] that I was involved in a string of

> heterosexual conquests. If she ever found out I was gay, I knew she'd go back to court and get an order forbidding me to see the children.

Another respondents remarked:

> After my youngest turned eighteen, I phoned my ex-wife and said: "Hey, I think there's something you should know -- I'm gay." She about shit. I know it wasn't fair of me to hold back on this all those years, but it wouldn't have been fair for her to keep the kids away from me either.

Once they are denied visiting rights, gay fathers have little recourse in regaining access to their children. Successful legal appeal for gay people in such matters is problematic, a situation which these men perceive as legally sanctioned "blackmail."

As can be seen, a degree of defensiveness still exists in this stage with regard to being gay, particularly with respect to announcing oneself as gay to employers, wives, and children. Defensiveness in respondents' announcements about themselves tends to spill over to other social behaviors and attitudes. They strive to present a favorable image to the non-gay world and try to blend in with conventional society as far as possible. They tend to look down upon still married gays and their "deceitful" arrangements and furtive sex, complaining that "they're the ones who give the rest of us a bad name."

> Frazier's (1962) description of symbolic status striving among the black bourgeoisie is paralleled in many respects among middle and upper-middle class gay people. The emphasis on clothes, travel, sociability, and residential arrangements can be seen both as symbolic status striving and as an attempt to

> construct a conventional facade for public consumption...[They believe] that only if gay people could "clean up their act" (and be more like everyone else) most of their difficulties would disappear...(Lindquist 1976: 104).

It becomes clear that, while respondents in Stage Four announce themselves as gay to homosexual friends and live a gay lifestyle in all respects except for secrecy at work and with children, residues of marginal status and identity difficulties persist. Nevertheless, the degree of passing and compartmentalization of gay and straight worlds is much less for men in this stage than for those in previous stages.

Often respondents do not realize how far they have progressed into their new identity until they return home for a visit. Their previous community serves as a marker to record the extent of identity shift. The impact is typically striking.

> I don't know what's wrong. I can't talk to [former neighbors] anymore. We don't speak the same language. I guess we've just grown apart. I know moving here [San Francisco] has something to do with it.

Such recognition of alienation from respondents' former social and cultural milieu thus serves to strengthen their new alignments in identity.

HOW DO OTHERS PERCEIVE ME?

Just as there are two announcements of self during Stage Four, there are two perceptions by others: 1) children and people in the work environment tend to see respondents as heterosexual; 2) fellow gays perceive respondents as gay.

Assessment by Offspring and Fellow Workers

Children continue to see their fathers as heterosexual. This needs to be qualified, however, since children tend not to think of parents in sexual terms. The fathers' sexual identities are not a salient perception for children. They simply do not perceive their fathers as sexually different.

Persons in respondents' work environments tend to perceive them as heterosexual. Rumors may occasionally circulate to the contrary, although no rumors were persistent enough to result in any respondent's dismissal. Gay familymen perceive that work associates generally do not question their sexual orientation but see them merely as divorced heterosexual fathers, statuses that are often thought to be incompatible with homosexuality.

Perceptions of Gay Associates

During Stage Four, respondents report gradually moving away from married friends and shifting their reference group to fellow singles. This is a commonly reported experience of divorcing couples (Weiss 1975: 18), whether from a gay/straight marriage or otherwise. In so far as both these groups are aware that respondents are gay, the shift away from old friends is only partly voluntary. It is voluntary in so far as respondents enjoy being with their own kind to share mutual gay concerns. It is coerced in so far as heterosexual friends are upset about a former "heterosexual" turning "traitor" by becoming gay. Antonovsky (1960: 431) discusses a similar reaction from Jews to other Jews who deny their former allegiance:

> What greater hatred is there than that of the "loyal" (to whatever cause or group) to the ex-loyal, the "formerly one of us" turned "traitor"?

In Stage Four, respondents are quite concerned about how they are perceived by fellow gays. They fear that their ex-husband and father status could distance them from persons to whom they wish to be close. Consequently, respondents tend to disclose their familyman status to only selected gays. They "sound out" audiences and disclose only to those they feel will react favorably or in a non-judgmental way.

Perhaps because of this "sounding," respondents report that they seldom encounter hostility to their status as fathers from other gays. They do not, however, perceive encouragement or support for their father identities from their new-found friends. Respondents feel they are generally viewed with curiosity, pity, or confusion:

> They [gays who have been told that I am a father] think it's interesting, but not very important, and that kind of hurts.
>
> I've had them mostly say they feel sorry for me, yeah. [I: Why?] Financially, coming out late, maybe. I don't think most people understand.
>
> I told this one guy and he said, "Are you bragging or complaining?"

Childless gays, like childless people in general

(Veevers 1980: 62), appear to have a lower tolerance of, or disinterest in, children. This situation prompts gay familymen to omit discussion of the parenting aspects of their lives when interacting with other gays. They feel they do not have understanding others with whom they can discuss an important aspect of their lives, and this is a source of sadness.[5]

This condition is more problematic for respondents with younger children than for those whose children have reached late adolescence or adulthood. As children become adults, the salience of the familyman status diminishes, and respondents do not feel as sharply the compartmentalization between their gay and familymen identities in gay interaction. They are perceived by gay others, not as gay familymen, but simply as gay.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In Stage Four, respondents feel they are gay. Although plagued with difficulties, their movement into the gay culture deepens and enriches their gay self-concept. In announcing themselves, however, respondents disclose this feeling only to gay audiences and to heterosexuals whom they feel can be trusted not to report the knowledge indiscriminately. Respondents announce themselves as heterosexual in employment contexts and, for the most part, with their immediate families. Respondents fear loss of occupation and loss of child-visitation rights if homosexuality is disclosed to these two groups.

Generally, respondents are perceived as heterosexual by children and employers. Persons with whom respondents socialize (other gays and sympathetic heterosexuals) validate respondents as being homosexual. Only a minority of gay others appear to view respondents as familymen or to see that identity as salient.

It is clear that, during Stage Four, respondents come to accept their homosexuality and move from the periphery of the gay culture to take a much more active part in it. As the next section explains, this involvement increases in Stage Five.

NOTES

[1] It is apparent that the data for Stages Four and Five are less rich than for preceding stages. There is an important reason for this: Half of the respondents were in Stages Four and Five at the time of the initial interview; and, because they were currently experiencing changes associated with these stages, they did not evidence the same kind of perspective on these stages as they did on previous ones. In general, respondents were unable to provide critical assessment of their position in Stages Four and Five.

[2] Sexual solicitation patterns of respondents change markedly after they leave their marriages. Because gay familymen during their marriages feel uncomfortable about their homosexual urges and cannot afford time away from home to play the sometimes lengthy waiting games of cruising, they typically develop forward, blunt approaches to soliciting male-male sex. Married respondents must be blunt since if they do not achieve gay sex on their rare "night-out", they may wait a long time for the next opportunity. Consequently, married homosexuals have a reputation in the gay world of lacking sensitivity and finesse in cruising. In contrast, unmarried gays are freerer to establish their own cruising schedule and proceed at whatever pace is comfortable. For example, one of the first gay skills respondents report learning after divorce is "stroking". Stroking is a playful form of cruising midway between a casual glance and a deliberate pass. It does not lead to sex, but merely lets a man know via visual clues alone that you find him attractive. Before learning this skill, gay familymen, seeing homosexuality in only genital terms, interpret stroking not as a fun activity in its own right but as sexual failure, "cock-teasing", or rejection. Once respondents are away from their marriages, their sexual solicitation patterns become more relaxed, more playful, and more integrated into their everyday lives.

[3] Two respondents who had relatively amicable separations found that during this period "things got nasty" when financial terms of the divorce were being settled. Wives in these two cases used the threat of homosexual exposure and court restriction of child visitation rights as levers to extract additional financial concessions.

[4] Lest one think that job discrimination against homosexuals is a thing of the past or that it happens only in remote areas with uneducated employers, the following example is noteworthy: After being criticized for interrogating a job applicant regarding marital status and position on homosexual issues, Imperial County (California) Supervisor,

James Bucher, defended his actions by stating:

> If you want to label me anti-queer, I'll proudly wear that label. I will not be a party to knowingly hiring a queer. We are talking about responsible county positions here, not all jobs....How would it look for this county's top official to be a queer? (Imperial Valley Press, January 6, 1982, p. 1).

The province of Quebec and the state of Wisconsin are the only two North American jurisdictions where job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is prohibited. For a summary of the research literature on job discrimination against homosexuals, see Plasek 1983.

[5] We witnessed anti gay familyman hostility at a gay conference where a member, disapproving of expenditures for a day-care facility, referred to gay familymen as the gay movement's "Uncle Bruces". Mager (1975) and Lynch (1978) present personal stories of their sadness in what they see as the gay community's lack of understanding and support for gay familymen.

CHAPTER NINE

STAGE FIVE: IDENTITY AFFIRMATION

> Our images of self are facilitated and restrained by the expectations of others; we are sensitive to the expectations of those who are most significant to us. But our selection of significant others is limited by our positions in the varied institutions of which we are members. Within these institutional limits, however, we will generally turn toward those whom we believe will confirm the desired image we would have of ourself. And, if others' expectations and images of us are contrary to our desired image, we will try to reject them, and seek only confirmation among more congenial others.
>
> -- Hans Gerth and C. Wright
> Mills (1961: 20)
> Character and Social Structure

INTRODUCTION

A central question for sociologists over the past few decades has been the effect of deviant status on individual identity. From the perspective of interactionist theory, one's image of one's self depends heavily upon the image others have of us. Identity develops through an on-going, interactive process, as social reaction and self perception follow each other in a spiraling fashion, as the individual responds to and typically internalizes those social reactions. An amplification of deviance or "secondary deviance" (Lemert 1951) may result.

Although the interactionist perspective has increased our understanding of deviance, the emphasis on reactive aspects of deviance has blurred the active role of individuals in negotiating their own social position, as Kitsuse (1981) has recently explained. Rather than passively accepting others' assessments, deviants may actively engage in creating new definitions of their own behavior, definitions which may diverge widely from the dominant perspective.

Responding to this analytic gap, Kitsuse (1981: 9) uses the term "tertiary deviance" to refer to "the deviant's confrontation, assessment, and rejection of the negative identity embedded in secondary deviation, and the transformation of that identity into a positive and viable self-conception." Tertiary deviants reject accommodating strategies and argue that their difference is no reason to abridge their civil rights or impugn their social value. They redefine the situation, attempting to persuade others that they are not deviants; they "claim the right to go in [to society] and stay in _just like everybody else_" (1981: 10; emphasis in original). This assimilationist stance characterizes the attitudes of gay familymen in Stage Four.

In Stage Five, however, respondents take tertiary deviance one step further. Rather than being content with simple integration into existing society, respondents develop a radical critique of society, condemning their condemners and substituting a new weltanschauung (Mannheim, 1952) that demands recognition as moral, or even superior, people. A similar stand is taken by the Jewish intellectual, Albert Memmi, regarding Jewish identity:

> As a Jew I exist more than non-Jews! My uniqueness makes me exist more, because it makes me more cumbersome, more problematic to others and myself, because my conscience is more painfully aware, because the attention of others is more directly focused on me (1973: 29).

Respondents may redefine themselves, not as deviants, but as an oppressed minority. Consequently, they present their actions as political resistance and their difficulties with society as injustice rather than personal misfortune -- definitions crucial to the development of a socio-political movement (Turner and Killian 1972; Cloward and Piven 1979). Their deviance is celebrated as honorable resistance and the locus for prescribed change shifts from the individual deviant to the society. Examples of this development are discussed in the identity matrix of Stage Five below.

WHO DO I FEEL I AM?

Respondents who reach this stage of identity development feel they are gay. The bitter experience of divorce adds a militant stridency to this feeling. Men converted from a heterosexual lifestyle have a fervor similar to people who are "born again," be they Christians converted from agnosticism or abstainers converted from alcoholism. Merton (1968: 350) explains this by stating that people who change their reference group often find it necessary to adopt extreme postures to both their former and present groups. They become "dependently hostile to a negative reference group;" they need to take a stance of "compulsive alienation" (Merton 1968: 350). This reaction formation insulates the man from competing alternative explanations, reduces cognitive dissonance, and confirms in his mind the correctness of his present feelings. To gain an identity it may be necessary to "go overboard." Extreme postures are also adopted by teenagers as they develop identities.

The identity reconstruction that occurs in Stage Five is manifested in changes in affiliative patterns and in revisions in long-range plans and goals. One respondent's comments are typical of many in Stage Five:

> Things that used to be important to me aren't nearly so important now -- like being rich and famous. Mind you I've still got ambitions, but I'm more interested now in being a whole person. When I came out of the closet as a homosexual I also came out as a human being. I'm more honest now -- not playing those Jeckel and Hyde games anymore. I like myself for the first time in my life. Don't get me wrong: I'm not perfect -- yet [laughs]. But I can look in the mirror and say, "[Frank], you're a faggot and you're fabulous."

Another gay familyman said:

> I've always been gay; it's just that I tried everything to prove to myself and the world that I wasn't. At last, with all that pain and shit behind me, I'm living my way.

In more academic language, Weinberg (1977: 505) describes additional benefits of securing a valid identity:

> To have a clear, firm, secure identity, free of guilt and ambivalence, is not just a matter of how one conceives of oneself and feels about oneself. It *simplifies one's life*. To decide, finally, what one "really" is, is a decision that in turn simplifies or even entails automatically a whole lot of

> other decisions. It defines one's relevances and priorities. It provides one with criteria for meeting and resolving all sorts of situations. Not being able to make up one's mind about what one is, is not being able to make up one's mind about what to do. Deciding what one is does not provide one with a blueprint or script for dealing with any situation or problem, but it does simplify the issues. One now knows what is important and what is trivial (emphasis in original).

In part, the simplification of issues experienced by gay familymen in Stage Five centers around their often intense involvement in the organizations and institutions of the gay community. In joining gay father organizations, for instance, respondents find an area where they can express their identities both as familymen and as homosexuals. Integrating the two identities is significant for them, and is often expressed in the sentence, "I'm home."[1] One respondent expresses this in poignant terms:

> I always envied people who had close families....but now I have my family. These are my people.

WHO DO I ANNOUNCE MYSELF TO BE?

In Stage Five, respondents announce themselves as gay. Their announcement of self is not only a personal affirmation, but a political declaration to champion the gay community. Announcement of self in this stage combines both anger and pride in an activist stance. Most of the respondents evidence anger over a perceived loss of youth, over the games they were forced to play, over what many see as "wasted life." Some work through their sense of loss and anger in psychotherapy, while many express these feelings in joining gay political organizations and gay father groups. It is noteworthy that the heads of some major gay organizations are formerly married gay men with children: Dr. Bruce Voeller, past President of the National Gay Task Force; The Rev. Troy Perry, founder of the Metropolitan Community Church; Harry Britt, San Francisco City Supervisor, representing the gay Castro area; Dr. David McWhirter, Chairman of the Gay Caucus of the American Psychiatric Association. (See Lee 1977.)

Humphreys (1972: 142) describes the politicization that gay familymen experience in Stage Five as "stigma conversion":

> In converting his stigma, the oppressed person does not merely exchange his social marginality for political marginality, although that is one interpretation the socially dominant segments of society would like to place upon the process. Rather, he emerges from a stigmatized cocoon as a transformed creature, one characterized by the spreading of political wings. At some point in the process, the politicized "deviant" gains a new identity, an heroic self-image as crusader in a political cause.

The new-found pride, then, is more than a way of dealing with anger over past deprivation. It is a manner of making proud announcements of the previously suppressed identity. (See Turner, 1972, on "deviance avowal".)

Because men in this stage make themselves highly visible as gay, they are relatively easy to contact for the purpose of interviewing. Although these respondents come from a range of economic backgrounds, they tend to have high social and occupational resources. Some have tolerant employers; some are full-time gay activists; others are self-employed, often in businesses with largely gay clienteles. Those who reach Stage Five, therefore, have either discovered that employers or business partners will not reject them because of their proclaimed sexual orientation; or the gay familymen place themselves in occupational positions in which announced homosexuality is an asset rather than a liability.

Announcement to Children

Men in Stage Five differ from those in Stage Four by announcing their homosexuality to their children, as well as to employers and other audiences. They report children's reactions to be more positive than had been anticipated. As one respondent states:

> At worst I figured instant rejection; their mother or society would poison their minds against me. At best I thought they'd be blase. It was beyond my fondest dreams to think telling my kids I'm gay would actually bring us closer together, but it has. The adjustment period was touchy at first, but now their acceptance is amazing.

Interviews with children reveal a belief that their father's candor and honesty helped to strengthen the relationship. Also, the father's coming out tended to relieve some family tensions. Children gained insight into their parents' marital problems and were less apt to blame themselves for difficulties in the home. Children who showed the greatest acceptance were those who, prior to full disclosure, were gradually introduced by their parents to homosexuality through meeting gay family friends, reading about it, and discussing the topic informally with parents.

Negative reactions to the father's homosexuality consisted of the following: Two children suspected years before disclosure and were upset because they thought their father should have trusted them enough to broach the issue sooner. One son in his late teens, who had become a religious fundamentalist, said, "I don't talk to him about my sex life, so why should he tell me about his? I'm not interested in that kind of talk." Another son -- now self-defined as heterosexual but who had had two homosexual "experiments" during adolescence -- said that he was initially uncomfortable with his father's gay friends but that this had since lessened. A daughter, whose father chose a lover about her age, felt "replaced." Another expressed ambivalence:

> Dad's coming out has made me suspicious if there are a lot more out there. I don't like having to wonder about my boyfriends; other girls don't. Things would be less complicated if I'd never heard or had to think about it. I guess I want to know, but I don't want to know.

More typical from the children were favorable comments such as the following:

> I know dad has gone through a lot of pain. He's sensitive. Now I know I can talk freely to him about the things that are important to me, too.

> I wasn't surprised or shocked. He is still my dad and I still love him. He is still the same person he's always been. Well, he takes better care of himself and is more relaxed now, but I mean he is still the same person inside. Just because he is gay doesn't change my love.
>
> I'm glad he came out to me. It started us communicating. It made him more human. It was also the first time I ever understood what our family is all about and what it means to belong to it. Now I understand how we all fit together.

Supporting evidence of this finding is conveyed in writings of three sons who sensitively and warmly discuss their fathers' possible homosexuality (Ackerley 1968; Nicolson 1973; Spike 1973).

Despite evidence of a warm father-child bond, most of the gay fathers did not have custody of their children. Financial considerations, such as those noted in Chapter Eight, domestic limitations, career advancement, day-care difficulties, fears about custody trials, and the nature of the relationship with the wife led most men not to seek custody. The two fathers who waged and won informal custody battles with wives expressed concomitantly high commitment to spending considerable time with and devotion to their children./ However, most of the fathers who lived with their children did so only because the mother did not want them or the children were of such an age that they were allowed to choose for themselves and thus chose to live with their fathers. (See Hitchens, 1979/80.)

One gay familyman says that his children have arrived at the stage of acceptance where they are able to joke about the unique quality of their family. He says his children laugh at the idea of Anita Bryant praying for him and point to men in magazines that they know he finds attractive. A daughter jokingly says, "The only thing I worry about is that we'll be in competition for the same man."

If any pattern in differential acceptance is found, it is that daughters tend to be more accepting than sons and that wives tend to be the least accepting of all. This difference is explainable by reference to the varying commitment each has had in the homosexual denial system. Over the years of marriage, wives -- for economic, ego, and social reasons -- tend to deny numerous clues indicating their husband's homosexuality. Consequently, when this elaborate denial facade is exposed, the wife's confrontation with her own self-deception as well as her husband's deceit is frequently devastating.

By contrast, children are minimally involved in such denial. In fact, most had not even thought of their fathers in any sexual terms, much less homosexual ones, prior to the disclosure. Two children resented being forced to see their father as a sexual being. Daughters, more than sons, tend to see their fathers' gay relationships in romantic terms rather than sexual ones, tend to empathize more fully with the emotional impact of their fathers' new-found relationships and, consequently, are more favorably disposed toward them.

Open displays of affection between the father and his gay lover or friends appear to be an issue that the gay familymen are initially more concerned about than are the children. One respondent notes that affectionate horseplay among the father, lover, and children "broke the ice" for them. Another states:

> Some think gays flaunt sex, so [my lover] and I were maybe over-cautious when the kids first came to live with us. We have sex in private, of course, but now we kiss and touch in front of them. It's important they know [Tom] and I love each other and see us relate that way. There's no reason we should be any more modest in front of our kids than straights are with theirs....Last Sunday morning, they came into our bedroom and we all got into a pillow fight. It was hilarious, but I was exhausted before the day even got started.

The daughter and son of one gay father regularly join him and his lover in the relative intimacy of a nude dip in their jaccuzzi. These children report being relaxed about the affection and appear well-adjusted. This small number of cases cannot prove that children are unaffected by displays of homosexual intimacy, although it is interesting that observed reactions contradict popular belief on the topic.

It appears that children generally provide positive response to their fathers' announcement of their gayness. It is important at this point, however, to consider how others respond to open self-revelation on the part of these gay familymen.

HOW DO OTHERS PERCEIVE ME?

In Stage Five, respondents tend to devalue heterosexual others and to give much more value to homosexual others. The opinions of heterosexuals outside the immediate family tend to be dismissed: "Heteros can go fuck themselves." Commitment to other gays is centrally important:

> I suppose one reason I put in so many hours doing volunteer work at the [Gay and Lesbian Community Services] Center -- I mean putting up with endless committee meetings and so much crap -- was that I was so eager for stroking from other gays. It was the most important thing in the world for me to get praise and recognition from other gay women and men.

Characteristically, the men -- proud of their new-found identity -- organize their symbolic world around gay culture. Much of their leisure, if not occupation, is spent in gay-related pursuits. Others tend to perceive men in this stage as not only gay but flaunting in their difference. A respondent says: "I cannot have anything more than a perfunctory relationship with anyone unless they know I'm gay." One gay familyman, discussing another Stage Five friend, stated: "You know, he's the type who lets the checker at the supermarket know he's gay. I'm not quite that blatant myself."

These men, consequently, distinguish themselves in ideology from respondents in other stages. For example, what the others refer to as "discretion," men in this stage call "duplicity" and "sneaking around." Moreover, what closeted men see as "flaunting," openly gay respondents call "being forthright" and "upfront."

Since respondents in Stage Five spend most of their time with other homosexuals, negative reaction and stigma are limited. Men in this stage typically live in gay "ghettos" (Levine 1979: 102), mixing with other gays who hold to a similar ideology. They perceive that other homosexuals are their only "real friends" with whom they can achieve emotional satisfaction. They not only have a homosexual identity, but they believe it is better than a heterosexual identity. One gay familyman in his forties remarks with fervor:

> I'd be really thrilled if my son were to turn out gay. God, I can't imagine a worse fate than to be hetero. You know I'm going to love him however he turns out, but I think it's just so much more exciting to be gay.

It is ironic, if understandable, that the quoted respondent spent many years in duplicity and denial of his own homosexual orientation while passing through earlier stages of his identity development.

Gay familymen's enthusiasm for the gay culture in which they immerse themselves may be seen by others as involving a relatively partisan and uncritical stance. For example, Suppe (1981: 85) remarks:

> It is often very difficult to distinguish self-actualization from "mindless conformity" to a deviant subculture's values. For example, are "Castro clones" "self-actualizing" individuals or mindless conformists to norms of the San Francisco gay subculture? Do they enjoy "autonomy of self-worth" -- or are they psychological parasites?

These political and psychological dimensions of identity conflict resolution are outside the focus of the present research, but they may be worthy of consideration in future investigations.

It may be puzzling that some people relinquish heterosexual status and privilege to enter the stigmatized gay world. Coming out in the gay world, however, offers the respondents a publicly and personally congruent identity, role models, and affection in an affirming community. Such experiences ease the transition by facilitating construction of a favorable gay world view. (See also, Harry and DeVall 1978, and Murray 1980).

Respondents' efforts in constructing this weltanschauung are also helped by the Gay Liberation Movement. Parallel processes are at work, whereby the building of a personal gay identity is facilitated by the larger cultural context of increasing gay pride and diversification of gay institutions and heritage:

> Individual perceptions and actions change... with increasing integration into the community....Personal development, in many instances, recapitulates group development, as the individual moves from isolation to association (Adam 1978: 120).

Sagarin (1975: 144) argues that the consequences of adopting such gay identities involves foreclosing alternative possibilities (i.e., not adopting heterosexual or bisexual identities) and that this is a disservice to the people so identified. Sagarin, however, neglects the other side of the argument: Adopting a heterosexual identity also forecloses options, such as not being able to adopt bisexual and homosexual alternatives (Humphreys 1979: 239-240). Data from the present study suggest that not foreclosing options can have consequences of dubious desirability. Harry and DeVall (1978: 57) comment on these possible consequences and are worth quoting at some length.

> [When a person does not foreclose options by identifying himself as gay,] he declines to adopt gays as a reference group. He associates with gays only on a selective -- and largely sexual -- basis. Through maintaining flexibility of self-identity, he declines the option of participating in, and contributing to, the solidarity of any group, whatever its sexual persuasion. He is in, but not of, any group....He may also decline the option of paired intimacy, since such pairings foreclose options and largely imply a relatively permanent commitment to a particular sexual community. To the extent that many gays were to forego their identities as gay persons, the result would be a collection of homosexuals lacking in a reference group, the rewards of ingroup solidarity, any ability to neutralize stigma, political organization and rights, or the ability to resist the labeling attempts of such groups as the psychiatric profession.

Hence there are both social and psychological reasons for announcing oneself as gay and being perceived as gay for persons adopting gay identities. See Figure One for a complete overview of this development.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In Stage Five, the self feelings, self announcement, and public perception of respondents are that they are

STAGES OF IDENTITY CONFLICT RESOLUTION FOR GAY FAMILYMEN

Matrix Component	Stage One Disorientation	Stage Two Marginality	Stage Three Affiliation	Stage Four Acceptance	Stage Five Affirmation
	*	*	N=24	N=10	N=16
Who Do I Feel I Am?	Confused about feeling different **	Possibly bisexual	Familyman & occupation identities. Closeted gay, different from others	Gay **	Gay
Who Do I Announce Myself to Be?	No announcement. Assumed heterosexual by default	Heterosexual **	Heterosexual familyman/ Bisexual	Gay/ Heterosexual	Gay **
How Do Significant Others See Me?	Sissy, heterosexual, or asexual	Heterosexual	Heterosexual/ Closet case **	Gay/ Heterosexual	Gay

N = Number of respondents in the stage at the time of the initial interview.

* Knowledge of these stages is derived from recollected data.

** Dominant matrix component for each stage.

Figure 1

gay. Consequently, there is congruence in the matrix of identity components. Both compartmentalization and interpersonal awkwardness are reduced, and the person may be said to have a valid identity.

It may be more accurate to refer to this stage of identity development as Stage Five rather than as the "final stage." Since identity development is an ongoing process, it seems likely that there are further stages. There are insufficient data, however, in the present study to articulate what these stages might be. It is possible that the "them-us" stance in Stage Five, where heterosexuals are avoided or viewed suspiciously and where homosexuals are uncritically exalted, might give way to a further stage, where blending of the two worlds is possible without compromising identity integrity. In such a situation the homosexual identity may not be viewed as the identity but as one aspect in a life that has other important identities as well. The probability of such development is inversely related to the degree of anti-gay hostility in the society as a whole; however, the possibility remains for gay identity to be interfaced with non-gay society for mutual enrichment.

Further stages of identity development for gay familymen require additional research. The next chapter details some promising research paths and hypotheses for such investigations.

NOTES

[1] Dank (1973: 192) believes the "at home" feeling is an essential component in achieving a valid gay identity. Adam (1978: 133) concurs: "The feeling of being 'at home' strikes at the root of 'jemeinigkeit' which founds Heidegger's concept of 'authenticity'." Identity conflict about being homosexual is resolved when the individual achieves this sense of authenticity. (For theoretical discussions on identity authenticity, see Goslin 1969).

CHAPTER TEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

> Sociological theory must advance on these interconnected planes: through special theories adequate to limited ranges of social data, and through the evolution of a more general conceptual scheme adequate to consolidate groups of special theories.
>
> --Robert K. Merton (1957: XII)
> Social Theory and Social Structure

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this dissertation has been to develop a heuristic model to explain the social-psychological process whereby people resolve identity conflict and achieve a valid identity. Specifically, it has synthesized such a heuristic model from Strauss, Stone, and Rainwater's works, enumerated its strengths and deficiencies, and posed ten questions about areas of the model that remain unclear. A plan to empirically investigate these areas via research on gay familymen is proposed.

To this end, depth interviews were conducted with a "snowball sample" of fifty gay familymen charting the trajectory of identity changes in their lives. Respondents recount the process whereby they developed changing answers to the questions surrounding their conflicting identities: "Who do I feel I am?", "Who do I announce myself to be?", and "How do others perceive me?"

Limitations posed by the constraints of methodology and research feasibilities preclude conclusive generalizations about stages experienced by all people in resolving identity conflicts and achieving a valid identity. However, data analysis reveals that identity conflict resolution for the respondents in this research, involves a sequence of five developmental stages. These and other findings are discussed in the following section where we answer the ten questions posed in Chapter Two concerning the workings of the SSR model.

WORKINGS OF THE SSR MODEL

1) What are the stages?

The present research has identified five stages through which respondents pass in acquiring a valid identity: Identity Disorientation, Identity Marginality, Identity Affiliation, Identity Acceptance, and Identity Affirmation.[1] During the first stage, respondents build up meanings from social clues in their environments to discover that they are socially devalued. Respondents are confused and ambivalent about this sense of difference, and uncertain about what course of action to pursue. Since the feelings are nebulous, respondents do not tell others about their sense of self. Significant others give respondents the benefit of the doubt and interpret the silence to be an announcement of self conforming to the conventional order. At the end of Stage One, respondents are anxious and upset about their identity. Their uncomfortable disorientation leads them to seek viable alternative ways of managing their identities.

In Stage Two, respondents develop accounts to neutralize their sense of devaluation and to normalize themselves. Such accounts are only intermittently successful, however, and there is an oscillation between feeling devalued and feeling conventional. Respondents announce themselves as conventional and are aided in this by emphasizing other identities which smokescreen or trivialize the devalued status. Significant others perceive respondents as conventional and are major figures in promoting among respondents a tenuous sense of conventionality.

In Stage Three, respondents come to admit to themselves that they are devalued, although less deserving of devaluation than others in the category. Via the establishment of a reciprocal love relationship with a similarly devalued other, respondents come to acknowledge that the devalued status is relevant for at least part of their personality and explore ways to incorporate it into their lives without it coming to the attention of conventional significant others. Consequently, respondents compartmentalize their announcement of self admitting to conventional others that they are conventional (albeit eccentric), and admitting to similarly devalued others that they share their devaluation in only minor ways. Conventional significant others perceive respondents as conventional, but eccentric, whereas devalued others feel alienated from respondents. As accounts and compartmentalization break down and affectionate relations with devalued others accelerate, the necessary anxiety is generated to lead respondents to seek new solutions in presenting themselves.

In Stage Four, respondents come to feel they are devalued like others in their category and move from the periphery of the devalued group to take a more active part in it. In announcing themselves, however, respondents disclose this feeling only to similarly devalued others and to conventionals whom they feel can be trusted not to report the knowledge indiscriminately. To other conventionals, respondents announce themselves as conventional. Devalued persons and other intimates perceive respondents to be in the devalued category, but most conventional people still perceive respondents to be conventional. This reduced compartmentalization still carries some discomfort and is responsible for respondents moving to the next stage in search of a more viable identity.

In Stage Five self feelings, self announcement, and public perceptions of respondents are that they belong to a devalued category. However, the supposed negative attributes of this category are transformed into positive characteristics so that respondents view themselves as valuable members of society. There exists congruency in the matrix of identity components, interpersonal awkwardness is alleviated and the person may be said to have a valid identity.

During the five stages, answers to the three matrix questions move closer to the new identity. The individual becomes less ambivalent and more certain about his feelings. Likewise, announcements of self become more consistent and compartmentalization of audiences becomes less necessary. Consequently, others' perceptions move more in line with self feelings and self announcement.

This process can be summarized by listing the five tasks in identity conflict resolution: 1) the discovery of oneself as devalued, 2) acquiring the ability to escape devaluation, 3) establishment of a reciprocal affectionate relationship with a similarly devalued person, 4) connection to a supportive group, and 5) transformation of the devalued status into a positive attribute so one sees oneself in a new cognitive category. These tasks correspond to the five stages and clarify the identity work that marks transitions across stages.

2) Are the Stages Discrete?

Data from the present study indicate that the stages are not discrete. The "doing" and "being" aspects of identity (Weinberg 1978: 144) involve complex processes with numerous gradations, resulting in the blurring of lines between stages. The precise cutting points between stages are arbitrary. Ten of the respondents, however, have read the findings of this research and, seeing themselves in the stages described, believe the stages reflect their experience.

One exception is of a respondent who agreed with all the stages except that he thought there should be an additional stage inserted for the "white-knuckle heterosexuality" period when the respondent is disclosed to his wife, but to no other heterosexuals. The suggestion of the one respondent is minor, although it does underscore the fact that the stages may not be discrete and that the boundaries between the stages need further testing with additional populations to determine their generalizability, their external validity.

3) Are the Stages Experienced Sequentially?

For respondents in this research, the stages were experienced sequentially. For example, no respondent announced his devalued status before he had already suspected it. That is, Stage Three comes before Stage Five. To suggest otherwise, is to suggest a logical impossibility. The modal developmental sequence is: The respondent suspects he is devalued, engages in devalued behavior, labels himself as devalued, changes his conventional announcements to equivocal ones and then to devalued announcements (at least for selected audiences). Significant others begin to see the respondent as devalued rather than conventional.

Exceptions to this generally occur at the beginning of the sequence rather than the end. For example, two respondents recall engaging in homosexual behavior before suspecting they were homosexual and before labeling themselves as homosexual. Another respondent labeled himself homosexual before engaging in homosexual behavior (i.e., "homosexual virgin"). These cases, however, are exceptions and the sequence as described in Figure One is the modal development for respondents.

4) Do the Stages Follow One Another Inevitably?

Identity conflict resolution is not a straight line development. The stages toward identity matrix congruence do not follow one another inevitably. Movement is not unilateral. There are many negotiations back and forth, "in and out of the closet" to use gay argot. Respondents may double-back. (The word "regress" is avoided because of its negative connotations.) For example, two respondents were expelled by wives for homosexuality and the men remarried other heterosexual women rather than live openly gay lifestyles. One respondent was married and divorced three times before he came out publicly as gay.

Until the feedback loops among the matrix components convey to respondents their incongruent statuses and the awkwardness and pain associated with them, and until a viable alternative presents itself, respondents do not move to another stage. Put another way, respondents do not move easily or accidentally from stage to stage in resolving their identity conflicts. Rather, each stage is achieved by a painful searching process, negotiating with both the self and the larger world.

An important caveat needs to be stated. Movement across stages is assumed to arise from an attempt to reduce identity conflict anxiety. The assumption is that individuals have a need for consistency in perception. It is clear from this research, however, that people -- via accounts, denial, and compartmentalization -- can live with many apparent contradictions for large portions of their lives. Consequently, identity stages need not follow one another inevitably.

5) Do the Stages Consume a Particular Time Period?

The stages do not consume a particular time period. Some stages may be passed rapidly and others may extend through the life span. For example, respondents who easily recognize the "indexical particulars" (Garfinkle 1967: 14) of devalued status pass more quickly through the confused period of Stage One than do respondents who do not have access to this information. Also, respondents exposed in vice arrests tend to have conventional identities that dissolve more quickly than those who reveal their devalued status gradually.

Respondents who fall in love with another similarly devalued person move out of conventional identities and into devalued identities more quickly than those who do not experience this event. For example, one respondent was married approximately a year before he fell in love with another man, disclosed his homosexuality to his family and moved out of marriage into an openly gay lifestyle. In contrast, another respondent remained covert in marriage for approximately thirty-five years before he fell in love with another man and made the same transition. In short, the duration of each stage cannot be assigned a precise amount of time, at least not from the data generated by the present study. More is said about the timing of stages in the following sections, 6, 8, 9 and 10.

6) May Some Steps Be Realized Simultaneously?

Some steps may be realized simultaneously, merged, glossed over or bypassed. For example, one respondent says that he did not experience the stage of feeling sexually different in adolescence, that he never experienced these feelings until after marriage. For this respondent, both Stages One and Two merged into Stage Three. While this is an unusual pattern, it does indicate that some stages may be blended. For more on this, see the answer to question two in this chapter.

7) May a Person Secede From the Process?

No, a person may not secede from the process without achieving congruency. As Rainwater (1970: 374) is quoted on page one of this dissertation, "The need for a valid identity is fundamental. Everyone needs to 'be somebody'." The model is clear that as long as a person is living (and presumably not psychotic or otherwise deranged) he engages in identity conflict resolution and works at identity maintenance.

The only way a person may secede from the process of identity conflict resolution is through death. For example, two respondents were in transition to Stage Four when they were murdered. On an anecdotal level, there are biographies of famous (covert) homosexuals -- Errol Flynn, Somerset Maugham, Montgomery Clift -- which indicate that they died without ever reaching Stages Four or Five. Consequently, they did not complete the process of achieving congruency.

While living persons cannot secede from the process without achieving congruency, not all persons achieve congruency. People may be consistent or inconsistent or variously equivocal about their pronouncements and actions. When discrepancies exist, people may not recognize them immediately nor feel obliged to resolve them. Others do not have the social and occupational resources to create viable alternatives and move to further stages. Mechanisms of denial, accounts, and compartmentalization make living with some discrepancies tolerable although the identities are likely to be brittle. These people, however, still remain in the SSR identity process.

8) What Events and Conditions Correlate With the Stages?

Put another way, this question asks "How do the features of self definition correlate with devalued subcultural ties at each of the stages?" Taking the model step-by-step, the question can best be answered like this: In Stage One, respondents have no devalued subcultural ties. They have an "only one in the world feeling." This exacerbates their confused sense of identity. In Stage Two, respondents' devalued subcultural involvement is peripheral. They operate on the margins of the devalued world. Their self definition, for example, is "possibly bisexual" and their gay sex is furtive and genitally focused. In Stage Three, respondents expand their contacts into more central areas of the devalued community, but conventional commitments restrict full participation and necessitate continued compartmentalization. This situation contributes to respondents' sense that they may be devalued, but that they are different from other devalued people in the category.

In Stage Four, respondents are well acquainted with the devalued subculture and participate regularly in its activities. Compartmentalization is limited to interaction with a minority of conventional others. Self identity is aligned with devalued people and is supported by significant others in the devalued subculture. In Stage Five, respondents are typically immersed in the devalued subculture almost to the exclusion of conventional-world contacts. Respondents have a militant stance which is supported by this subcultural involvement. In summary, as one moves through the identity development process, self definition becomes more assuredly aligned with devalued others, and this identity is supported by increased subcultural involvement.

9) What Marks the Transition From Stage to Stage?

People do not instantly and obviously "know" that they are devalued. Rather, the knowledge is acquired cumulatively as respondents move from stage to stage. For example, Stage One for respondents is typically experienced at puberty, Stage Two during courtship, Stage Three while married, Stage Four while coming out as a single gay person, and Stage Five while living openly gay. Put another way, coming out to self consumes Stages One and Two, coming out to other devalued persons consumes Stages Three and Four, and coming out to additional significant others consumes Stage Five. Whether or not these events and conditions characterize the transitions other populations make toward a valid identity requires further research. It is clear, however, that the SSR model does not reify transient states into rigid types. The dynamic, processual nature of the model allows it to account for changes over time.

10) What Influences the Pace of Achieving Identity Congruence?

In the present research several social-psychological and demographic characteristics have been identified which appear to impede the pace whereby congruency is achieved. For example, respondents who move more slowly through the stages are those who tend to have greater religiosity and guilt, geographic inaccessibility to devalued institutions, negative assessments about their physical appearance and about their social skills with other devalued people. The slower moving respondents tend to be employed in dependent occupations, perceive they have poor health, and are among the lower socio-economic portion of the sample.

Because of the contrast between past and present societal attitudes regarding homosexuality, the respondents' age influences the mode of coping and, hence, the pace of the developmental process. That is, younger people tend to move more quickly through the process than older ones. Respondents who continue to live with their wives move more slowly through the stages since marriage tends to foster compartmentalization.

As said previously, the single experience that tends to accelerate the pace is respondents meeting others who self identity as gay, particularly lovers. Such gay reference group membership appears to be a crucial variable influencing the pace whereby identity congruence is achieved. Still it is important to realize the tenuous, negotiated nature of the process, that uncertainty characterizes each transition.

In providing answers to the foregoing ten questions this research has filled gaps in and extended the SSR model. We now know, for instance, what some of the identity development stages are, the separations among them, their duration, some of the factors that promote and retard identity movement, how self definition and subcultural involvement correlate with the stages, what marks transitions from stage to stage and what factors influence the pace whereby congruence is achieved. The utility of the SSR model as a heuristic device to explain the process of identity conflict and resolution has been considerably enhanced. There are, however, some remaining difficulties with the SSR model that are discussed in the following section.

STRUCTURAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Since the SSR model is grounded in symbolic interactionism, it is unable to account for wider social issues that govern identity conflict resolution and the achievement of a valid identity. Consequently, one criticism of the SSR model is that it fails to adequately consider structural conditions that influence the identity formation process. This is discussed below along with the points that the SSR model may be both culture-bound and time-bound.

There are primarily four structural conditions that inhibit respondents from self identifying as homosexual and inhibit others from identifying them as homosexual (Plummer 1975: 178). Two concern the nature of homosexuality in Western society, and two concern wider cultural issues.

1) Sexuality is privatized. Most sexual expression in Western society is relegated to the "back stage" regions of peoples' lives. Hence, the public has little concrete evidence of an individual's sexual orientation.

2) Homosexuality is generally invisible. Unlike the physically handicapped whose stigma makes them visible, homosexuality is not readily identifiable.

3) The "heterosexual assumption" (Ponse 1978: 58) renders homosexuality generally irrelevant for most people most of the time in Western society. People are assumed to be heterosexual until a bulk of evidence accumulates to suggest the contrary. Unless indicated otherwise, people are assumed to be heterosexual by default. The pervasiveness of the heterosexual assumption (along with other norms of social interaction, such as a tacit agreement to accept interactants at face value) make it unlikely that sexual orientation will be raised as an issue.

4) Life in Western society is segregated and

characterized by role compartmentalization. Occupational, domestic, and social lives may be organized so they do not cross. This facilitates dividing one's life territorially, temporally, and biographically. Few people need to know the totality of one's life.

These four factors eliminate homosexuality from most social situations and help respondents both to avoid dealing with their own homosexuality and to avoid sharing it with significant others. The strain toward matrix congruency suggested by the SSR model, therefore, is qualified by these structural conditions, a fact that the SSR model fails to note. In short, there is some slippage between the model and reality.

A second observation is that the SSR model may be time-bound. For example, Stage Five seems to be a recent phenomenon made possible only with the advent of the modern Gay Liberation Movement in Western society. The rise of gay culture and gay community are concomitant developments that support gay identity. These developments have allowed people to live exclusively and openly gay without compartmentalization. Heretofore, such an identity adjustment was unlikely. Future developments in the gay world (and the dominant society) may change the available repertoire of responses and the social pressures to implement the responses. What, if any, modifications in the SSR model are required by these developments are unknown.

The SSR model also may be culture-bound. If the cross-cultural literature on homosexuality (Carrier 1976; Herdt 1981; Whitham 1982) is accepted, it appears that many other cultures eschew exclusive homosexual identities and that they have considerable tolerance for homosexual expression within heterosexual marriage. These cultures seem to be characterized by forced mate selection, pro natalist imperatives and, the subjugation of the role of women. In such societies, the development and expression of male homosexuality follows a different course. For example, Herdt (1981) describes a tribe where virtually all men marry and father children but a substantial majority have "kept boys" with whom they continue pederastic relationships. Later, the boys go on to marry and have kept boys of their own. In such a culture, matrix component incongruence and maintenance of an exclusive sexual orientation identity appear to be non salient.

In contrast, men in Western societies typically feel attracted to the opposite sex, direct their activities toward coitus and report enjoyment from it, see themselves as having an underlying heterosexual orientation, adopt the heterosexual role, and others validate this self-perception. Cross-culturally, however, there is no necessary linkage among sexual behavior, fantasy, self-identity, and object of affectionate attachment. Even in Western culture, while there may be a strain toward consistency for most people among these components of sexuality, this is not invariably so. The ways these components change and the combinations in which they link with each other are multiple. Sexual identity and sexual orientation are complicated, multi-layered phenomena, and how they interface is problematic. In short, sexual orientation, sexual identity, and sexual behavior do not necessarily line up nor are they necessarily linked. This research shows some of the ways people assemble their sexuality and try to make sense of the relationships among the above components. Presently, it is unknown to what extent the SSR model is applicable to identity development (particularly homosexual identity development) in non Western countries. Further research might elaborate on these processes cross-culturally in more detail than the present study was designed or equipped to do.

AREAS OF FURTHER INVESTIGATION

The present research is exploratory, both as it studies the social histories of gay familymen and as it investigates the SSR model of identity development. Since corroborating data do not exist, the findings represent speculative beginnings rather than definitive conclusions. This section details promising lines of future research to further investigate the SSR model.

Gay familymen is only one of many populations that could be used to illustrate and develop the model.[2] Further testing with other populations that have seemingly incongruent statuses, yet with different sets of life contingencies -- lesbian mothers and Jews for Jesus, for example -- might uncover further qualifications and refinements for the SSR model. For example, is the idea of stages an appropriate conceptualization to discuss identity development? If so, do other populations resolve identity conflicts in fewer or more stages? How is it different for women, the handicapped or Asian Canadians? There is evidence to suggest, for example, that American Blacks as a group have reached the Identity Affirmation stage (Grier and Cobbs 1968). Native Indians as a group, however, appear to be only beginning to approach this stage (Robertson 1970). Moreover, Stage Five may be inaccessible to some groups. For example, can pedophiles as a group, given social hostility, ever reach Stage Five? To answer these questions, further research is required.

The middle class bias in the present sample calls for additional research with respondents who are more diverse in socio-economic status. The class bias in the present research, however, is not necessarily a disadvantage. Since middle class people have greater interest in abstract thinking, identity congruence, and issues of legitimacy, they are more likely to progress through the stages. Consequently, because the sample is largely middle class, we have more knowledge about Stages Four and Five than we would have if the sample had been more working class. Speculatively, working class respondents would provide little information for the model beyond Stage Three. However, a sample with a broader class base is needed to investigate this issue.

Another area for further research involves the interaction among the following three experiences: 1) the establishment of a reciprocal, affectional relationship with a devalued other who validates one's worth as an individual, 2) connection to reference groups who provide broader normative acceptance, and 3) acceptance into a subcultural lifestyle diverse in institutions and heritage that nourishes and fulfills cultural needs. While these three experiences are analytically distinct, they form a whole connected by feedback loops. The present research demonstrated that these experiences are important in identity development, but further research might be directed toward discovering the nature of these interrelationships and their feedback loops, and the precise way in which these components interact to impact identity development.

Longitudinal studies in the area of identity are needed. This research followed respondents for three years to chart changes in their identity, but this is a relatively short period considering the duration of life. Follow-ups at five year intervals with such a population could reveal important information about identity development across the life span.[3]

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed the purpose and plan of the research and summarized its findings by answering the ten questions of the SSR model posed in Chapter Two. Contributions of this research to developing and extending the SSR model are enumerated. Suggestions are proposed for further investigations with other populations. Although the SSR model is an interesting and useful heuristic device for discussing identity conflict resolution and the achievement of a valid identity, the model is limited by its slighting of structural conditions that affect identity. Further refinements in the model that address this issue remain a task for additional sociological research.

NOTES

[1] It is important to point out that respondents typically do not see the detail of stages described here. They describe what merely seems in retrospect as their life course. They emphasize the twists and turns in their lives and the choices made, both consciously and unconsciously, in arriving at their present status.

Likewise, significant others seldom recognize the detailed stages through which respondents have passed and this leads to complications. For example, wives and children upon being told about the homosexuality often feel that the man has suddenly changed, been "brainwashed," or "snapped." They feel his behavior is "out of the blue" with no antecedents. Frequently, significant others comfort themselves by discounting the gay behavior as merely a symptom of a mid-life aging crisis, and that it will probably be transitory. Gay familymen may encourage this interpretation by wives and children, not disclosing their long histories of homosexual interests, since the men do not want their families to know that for years they have been deceiving them.

Respondents' transitions are often dramatic, but to sensationalize them by placing them in the categories of brainwashing or snapping is unsupported by the data. The men's recounted lives did not involve a sudden, discontinuous upheaval. Rather their identity conflict resolution is a gradual development through which they ultimately express the homosexuality they feel they have had all along. Respondents see themselves achieving congruence between their feelings and lifestyles and gaining the integrity to express it.

Another interpretation is that respondents in recalling their histories are reinterpreting the past to conform with the present and that respondents actually experienced more abrupt sexual orientation changes than they are willing to admit. Respondents, however, are able to recount numerous incidents from their past which support the former interpretation of gradual development. Studies over the life span are important to address this issue. See Plummer (1981: 53-75) and Altman (1982: 39-78) on the debate between the "essentialists" and the "constructionists."

[2] Further empirical research is needed on gay familymen *per se*. Such investigations might profitably look at several areas: If courts are to fairly adjudicate custody cases involving gay familymen, information is needed on the quality of the relationship between these men and their children. For example, do gay familymen raise children who

disproportionately turn out to be gay? Is it likely that gay familymen molest their children? Do gay familymen expose their children to homophobic harassment and thereby undermine their social and psychological development? How do children of gay familymen feel about their fathers? Besides the courts, adoption agencies and foster parent organizations seek answers to these questions.

Research on gay familymen has broader application than just policy studies. The social histories of gay familymen provide information on the phenomenon of "adult re-socialization" (Brim and Wheeler 1966). For example, what are the processes involved, not only in coming out late, but in changing one's significant others, and in changing one's cultural reference group at an advanced age? Although these issues have been addressed in part in the present research, a more systematic investigation that focuses on these issues *per se* is likely to reveal additional dynamics of adult development.

Research on gay familymen may also reveal the impact of secrecy on family relations. Many families have some kind of "skeleton in the closet" -- illegitimacy, suicide, alcoholism, incest -- and by studying the effects of hidden homosexuality and passing and covering on family dynamics, we may better understand how dissembling in general influences social and intimate contacts. (A beginning on secrecy research has been made by Handle (1967) in his book, *The Psychosocial Interior of the Family*.)

[3] Longitudinal studies are important in the interest of research economy. When subjects are relatively covert and inaccessible, efficient deployment of research energies suggests that the extraordinary time and resources required to obtain samples and gain the trust of stigmatized persons be balanced by studying respondents over time in order to maximize knowledge gained from the great investment of effort in developing initial relationships with respondents.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

AMBISEXUAL: See "Bisexual."

BISEXUAL: "Persons who are about equally homosexual and heterosexual in their overt experience and/or psychic reactions. They accept and equally enjoy both types of contacts, and have no strong preferences for one or the other" (Kinsey 1948: 641). "Bisexual," as described in this study, refers more to Ross' definition (1979: 50): people who are "either defensive or guilty about their homosexuality or, possibly, in some cases, slow to adapt to their homosexuality by first defining themselves as bisexual, then as homosexual."

CLOSET: Being secretive about homosexual desires/behavior. There are degrees of being in the closet.

COMING OUT: The process of acknowledging homosexuality to oneself and to significant others (Dank 1971: 181).

GAY: Homosexuals who identify with and associate with a community of like-minded individuals (Thorpe 1972: 352).

GAY FAMILYMEN: A male who defines himself as homosexual, who has been married to a woman at least once and who has lived with a preadolescent or adolescent child as a father for at least five years. "Familyman" is used as one word in order to make clear that it is the man with husband and father statuses who is gay, not the family to which he belongs.

HOMOSEXUAL: Same-sex "erotic attractions in regard to overt experience and in regard to psychic reactions" (Kinsey 1948: 641).

IDENTITY: "Identity establishes what and where the person is in social terms. When one has identity he is situated -- that is, cast in the shape of a social object by the acknowledgement of his participation or membership is social relations. One's identity is established when others place him as a social object by assigning him the same words of identity that he appropriates for himself or announces. It is in the coincidence of placements and announcements that identity becomes meaningful" (Stone 1962: 93).

IDENTITY WORK: Techniques, strategies and methods that have as their purpose effecting a change in the meaning of a particular identity, or a change in the identity itself.

LOVER: Partner in an intimate sexual-emotional relationship between two homosexuals.

MATRIX INTERCOMPONENT CONGRUENCY: Identity conflict resolution.

APPENDIX A, Continued

NORMAL SMITHS: "People who, through craftsmanlike skills, help restore and maintain conventional identities for supposed deviants" (Lofland 1969: 209). Some examples of "normal smiths" are : clergy, parents, mental health professionals.

STAGE: When respondents give new answers to the three matrix components, in an attempt to resolve the interpersonal uneasiness of identity conflicts, they are said to have entered another "stage." Five stages are proposed in this developmental sequence for gay familymen: Identity Disorientation, Identity Marginality, Identity Affiliation, Identity Acceptance, Identity Affirmation.

STRAIGHT: Heterosexual, sometimes with the connotation of conventional.

TEAROOM: A public washroom where sexual activity takes place (Humphreys 1975).

APPENDIX B

IDENTITY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION

PRE-INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Respondent's Name: ______________________________

2. Address: ______________________________

3. Phone Number: ______________________________

4. Occupation: ______________________________

5. Referred By: ______________________________

6. Age (Approximate): ______________________________

7. Living with wife and children? Visiting rights?
____

8. Interview Appointment: Date____ Time:____ Place:_____

APPENDIX C

IDENTITY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Modified Kinsey (1948: 63-70) Life History

1. Social and Economic Data
   - Date of birth, birth order
   - Occupation, parents' occupation
   - Residential history
   - Health, religion, income
2. Structure and Composition of Family of Origin
3. Educational History
4. Recreational History
   - Friends
   - Degree of disclosure
5. Early Sexual Behavior
   - Feelings surrounding this
   - Same- and opposite-sex attractions
   - Fantasy life
   - Self-rating on the Kinsey scales
6. Dating and Courtship History
   - Premarital activity
   - Feelings surrounding this
7. Sexual Identity History
8. Psychiatric History
9. Marital History
   - Decision to marry (was intended informed of homosexuality, if recognized?)
   - Nature and quality of married life
   - Homosexual history during marriage. Feelings about this
   - Family life and children. Feelings about parenthood
   - Salient issues within the marriage
   - Disclosure to spouse, children, relatives. Their reactions
10. Victimization and/or Legal Involvement

APPENDIX C, Continued

11. If Divorced, History of Dissolution of Marriage
    Custody and visiting arrangements
    Current domestic and parental situation

12. Current Sexual-Affectional Feelings and Behavior

13. How Do You See Youself Now? For the Future?

14. What Information Do You Think Important to Tell Other Gay Familymen?

APPENDIX D

IDENTITY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION

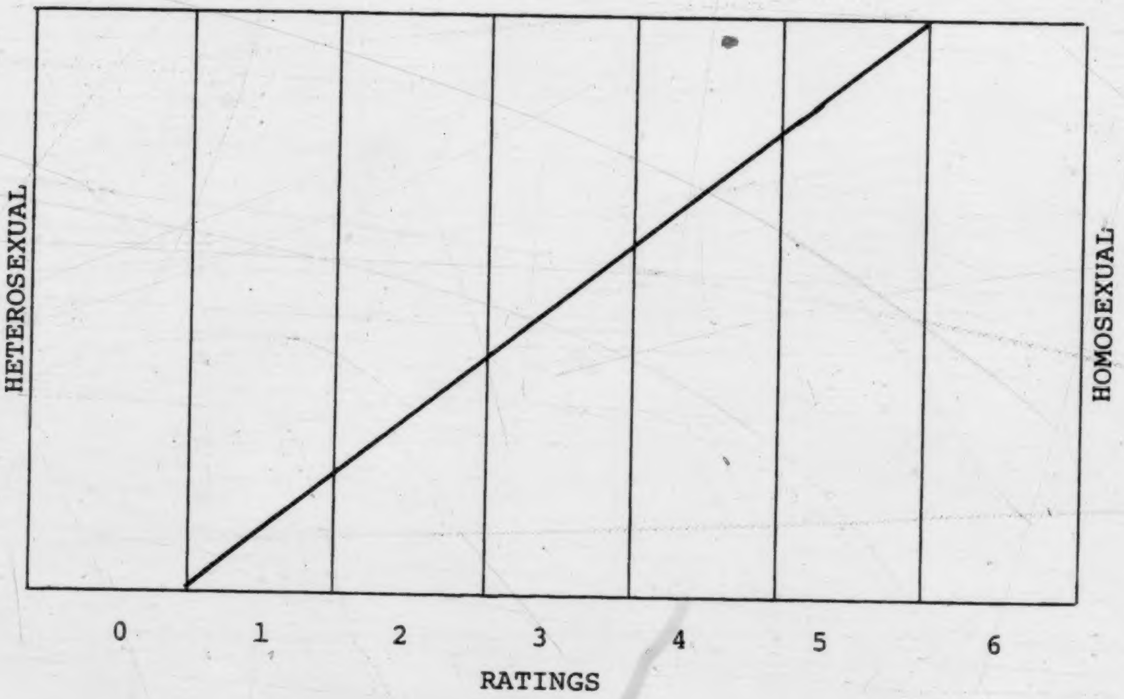
ANNUAL INCOME (BEFORE TAXES)

_________ Under $4,000
_________ 4,000 - 7,999
_________ 8,000 - 11,999
_________ 12,000 - 15,999
_________ 16,000 - 19,999
_________ 20,000 - 24,999
_________ 25,000 - 29,999
_________ 30,000 - 34,999
_________ 35,000 - 39,999
_________ 40,000 - 44,999
_________ 45,000 - 49,999
_________ 50,000 - 74,999
_________ 75,000 - 99,999
_________ $100,000 or More

APPENDIX E

IDENTITY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION

THE KINSEY SCALE



Heterosexual-homosexual Rating Scale

Based on both psychologic reactions and overt experience, individuals rate as follows:

0. Exclusively heterosexual with no homosexual
1. Predominantly heterosexual, only incidentally homosexual
2. Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual
3. Equally heterosexual and homosexual
4. Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual
5. Predominantly homosexual, but incidentally heterosexual
6. Exclusively homosexual

1. Sexual Behavior
    a. Throughout your life
    b. The present
2. Sexual Fantasy Attraction
    a. Throughout your life
    b. The present

APPENDIX F

IDENTITY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION

POST-INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Respondent's Name: ________________________________
2. Physical Appearance: ________________________________

   ____

   ____
3. Emotional Reactions During Interview: ________________

   ____
4. Estimation of Rapport: ________________________________
5. Description of House; Car; Hobbies; Momentoes; Newspapers; Magazines; Anything Unusual: ________________

   ____

   ____

   ____
6. Description of Significant Others Met (Wife; Children; Lover; Room-mate; Gay Friends; Straight Friends; Neighbors): ________________________________

   ____

   ____

   ____

VITA

NAME: Brian James Miller
PLACE OF BIRTH: Wingham, Ontario
YEAR OF BIRTH: 1950

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND DEGREES:

University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario
1970 - 1974 B.A.

University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario
1974 - 1975 M.A.

University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta
1975 - 1983

Marriage, Family, and Child Counselor
California State License #15470
1978 - 1980 M.F.C.C.

HONORS AND AWARDS:

Dean's Honor Roll
University of Western Ontario
1972, 1973

Gordon-Hanna Memorial Scholarship
University of Western Ontario, 1973

Huron Fellowship
University of Western Ontario, 1973

Department of Sociology Scholarship
University of Western Ontario, 1973

Public Speaking Award
Department of English
University of Western Ontario, 1973

UWO Scholarship
University of Western Ontario, 1974

HONORS AND AWARDS, Continued

Rhodes Scholarship Nominee
University of Western Ontario, 1974

Ontario Graduate Scholarship
University of Western Ontario, 1974 - 1975

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant
University of Western Ontario, 1971 - 1974
University of Alberta, 1976 - 1978

Quality Control Regional Representative
Statistics Canada, Summer 1972

Research Director
Ontario Ministry of Health, Summer 1973

Probation and After-Care Officer
Ontario Ministry of Corrections, Summer 1974

Teaching Assistant
University of Western Ontario, 1974 - 1975
University of Alberta, 1975 - 1976

Lecturer
University of Alberta, 1976, 1977, 1978

Psychotherapist
Private Practive, Los Angeles, 1980 - present

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice
Claremont Graduate School, 1981, 1982

Consulting Editor
Journal of Alternative Lifestyles, 1982 - present

Consultant to the City Court of Santa Monica
Santa Monica, California, Summer 1982

Consultant to the California Commission on Personal Privacy
Los Angeles, California, Fall 1982

Adjunct Assistant Professor
California State University, Northridge, 1983 - present

Invited lectures given at the following institutions: New York University, State University of New York Purchase; University of California Los Angeles, Claremont Colleges, Occidental College, University of Wisconsin Madison and, California State University Northridge.

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE, Continued

Papers read at the following professional meetings: American Sociological Association, Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association, Canadian Psychological Association, American Psychiatric Association, Western Society of Criminology, Society for the Study of Social Problems, Pacific Sociological Association.

PUBLICATIONS

(1) "Adult sexual resocialization: Adjustments toward a stigmatized identity," Alternative Lifestyles: Changing Patterns in Marriage, Family and Intimacy, Vol. 1, May 1978, pp. 207-234.

(2) "Lifestyles of gay fathers," pp. 239-252 in Martin Levine (ed.), Gay Men: The Sociology of Male Homosexuality. New York: Harper and Row, 1979.

(3) "Gay fathers and their children," Family Coordinator (now Family Relations), Vol. 28, October 1978, pp. 544-552.

(4) "Keeping in touch: Maintaining contact with stigmatized subjects," pp. 212-223 in William Shaffir, Robert Stebbins, and Alan Turowetz (eds.), Field Work Experience: Qualitative Approaches in Social Research. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980 (with Laud Humphreys).

(5) "Identities in the emerging gay culture," pp. 142-156 in Judd Marmor (ed.), Homosexual Behavior: A Modern Reappraisal. New York: Basic Books, 1980 (with Laud Humphreys).

(6) "Lifestyles and violence: Homosexual victims of assault and murder," Qualitative Sociology, Vol. 3, Fall, 1980, pp. 169-185 (with Laud Humphreys).

(7) "Gay men's relationships with women," in Deborah David and Robert Brannon (eds.), The 49% Majority: The Male Gender Role (2nd ed.). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley (in press).

(8) "Resocialization in moral careers of gay husbands and fathers," in Laural Richardson and Verta Taylor eds.), Issues in Sex, Gender, and Society: A Feminist Perspective. New York: D. C. Heath (in press).

PUBLICATIONS, Continued

(9) "Introduction," in Michael Ross, The Married Homosexual Man. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul (in press).

(10) "Lesbian/Gay Families." Guest co-editor of special issue of Alternative Lifestyles (in press).

Book reviews published in the following journals: International Review of Modern Sociology, Alternative Lifestyles, Contemporary Sociology and Choice.